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Henry Bradshaw

THE  
HOLY LYFE AND HISTORY  
OF  
SAYNT WERBURGE

VERY FRUTEFULL  
FOR ALL CHRISTEN PEOPLE TO REDE.

EDITED BY  
EDWARD HAWKINS, ESQ.

PRINTED FOR THE CHETHAM SOCIETY.

M.DCCC.XLVIII.

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## INTRODUCTION.

A Society, established for the publication of historical and literary remains connected with the Palatine counties of Lancaster and Chester, could not fail to direct their early attention to the history of a person so illustrious by her birth, so reputed for the sanctity of her life, so memorable for her imputed miracles, and whose name is familiar to every inhabitant of these palatine counties as the patroness saint of the cathedral of the diocese. Amongst the earliest notices issued by the Society was an announcement of their intention to publish a reprint of Henry Bradshaw's *Life and History of St. Werburgh* from the very rare quarto of 1521, printed by Pynson. That intention is now fulfilled by the present volume, containing the poem of which "Harry Braddeshaa, of Chestre Abbay, monke," is partly author, partly translator.

In the "prologe of the translatour," as he calls himself, he says, p. 4.

I purpose to wryte a legende good and true  
And translate a lyfe into Englysshe doubtles ;

and at p. 26 gives an account of the work, which he purposes to translate.

For as declareth, the true Passyonyary  
A boke wherin, her holy lyfe wryten is  
Whiche boke remayneth, in Chester monastery

I purpose by helpe of Jhesu kynge of blys  
 In any wyse to reherse, any sentence amys  
 But folowe the legende, and true hystory  
 After an humble style, and from it lytell vary.

These variations, be they "lytell" or much, seem to be founded upon histories and chronicles, which have been published, and are accessible to all who choose to trace the authorities for some of these legendary notices.

Unto this rude werke, myne auctours these shalbe  
 Fyrst the true legende, and the venerable Bede  
 Mayster Alfrydus, and Wyllyam Malvysburye  
 Gyrarde Polycronycon, and other mo in deed. p. 5.

The "true legende" is doubtless the "true Passyonyary" mentioned above, which is afterwards called the "thrid Passyonyary ;"

And as the history, of her lyfe doth expresse  
 In a boke nominat, the thrid passyonyary ; p. 120.

which also seems to have contained an account of more miracles than the translator was perhaps quite prepared to believe, or at least did not deem it quite expedient to publish at this time.

To expresse all myracles, written in the place  
 In a boke nominate, the thrid passyonyarye  
 It wolde require, a longe tyme and space  
 To the reders tedious, (nomervayle sothly)  
 Where we omytte, to writte of them specially  
 But touched in generall, unto your audience. p. 197.

The poem is preceded by a "Prologe in honour and laude

of Sainte Werburge and to the prayse of the translatur by J. T.," whose name and profession we have been as little able to ascertain as was Herbert, when he first noticed this work.

Of the main body of the poem then Bradshaw must be considered as a translator from a work,\* in the Latin language, then remaining in the library of Chester monastery, called the true or third Passionary, inserting such additional matter as he was pleased to extract from the various chronicles which he mentions. He was however not merely a translator, but an author, for the "Prologes" to the first and second books, pp. 1 and 134, "A litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine Saynte Werburge," p. 205, and the "breve conclusion," p. 207, are certainly original compositions of Bradshaw himself, and it is not improbable that he was also author of chapters 21 and 22, in the second book, being "A breve rehersall of the myracles of Saynt Werburge after her translacion to Chestre," and "A charitable

\* The author of the original work here translated is not known, nor was Bradshaw himself acquainted with his name, for in "a Balade to the auctour," published with the translation the very year in which it was concluded, is mentioned (p. 210) that "uncertayne was his name."

Warton observes "a great translator of the lives of the Saxon Saints from the Saxon, in which language only they were then extant, into Latin, was Goscelinus, a monk of St. Austin at Canterbury, who passed from France into England about 1058. Among the rest were the lives of St. Werburgh, St. Ethelred and St. Sexburgh, most probably the legends which were Bradshaw's originals." This conjecture can scarcely be reconciled to the above assertion with regard to the original author, that "uncertayne was his name."

mocion and desyre to all the inhabytauntes within the Countie Palatine of Chestre for the monasterie."

The poem is written in stanzas of seven lines each, of which the first and third, the second, fourth and fifth, and the sixth and seventh, rhyme with each other. To this arrangement there are a few exceptions; at p. 153 is a stanza of eight lines, of which the first and third, the second, fourth, fifth and seventh, the sixth and eighth, rhyme with each other. At pp. 115, 116, 126, are three stanzas similarly arranged, in which three cases however the last line is Latin. Chapters 21, 22 and 23, and two balades at pp. 211 and 212 are all written in similar stanzas of eight lines.

Throughout the poem, in order to produce, in reading, anything of rythmical intonation, the accent must be laid strongly upon the very last syllable of the line, even in cases where, according to the modern mode of pronunciation, the last syllable is as little dwelt upon as possible. Every stanza affords instances of this intonation, and it is scarcely necessary to refer to any particular passages, but in p. 125, the following illustrations may be observed, — gostly and remedy, parte and trinite, odour, savour, hour; body, clergy, verily, &c. &c.

The Latin language was probably very familiar to our author, for the reader can scarcely fail to be struck with the frequent introduction of quaint Latinisms. At p. 150 we find "With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was Eng-land." In the same page he talks of faith enduring "without recidivation," and in p. 152, of faith being "remanent;" we find "promyttynge," p. 163, 166; "facundious," p. 209,

210 ; “desydery,” 56, and several others may be discovered by consulting the glossary. The greater number of these words it will be perceived were derived directly from the Latin, but not unfrequently, as is most usual in writers of that age, the Latinisms appear to have been introduced under the influence of the French language upon our own, rather than directly from the Latin. At p. 153, he speaks of St. Alban’s monastery being edified, from *edifier* ; p. 115, of this life being *caduce* ; p. 137, of the abbey of Chester envired with walles ; baptism is written baptym, *baptime* ; convent, *covent* ; sautyng, from *assaut* ; and dygne of dutye, from *digne*. The termination of the past tense, derived from the Latin participle, is of almost universal occurrence, as maculate, preparate, coronate, nominat, tumulate, &c. &c.

At pp. 147, 158 and 179 are quotations from Henry of Huntingdon, which contain some errors ; it is as well therefore to reprint them here from Savile’s edition of that author.

p. 147.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitatis honorem  
 Armipotens Alfrede dedit, probitasque laborem,  
 Perpetuumque labor nomen, cui mixta dolori  
 Gaudia semper erant ; spes semper mixta timori.  
 Si modo victor eras, ad crastina bella pavebas.  
 Si modo victus eras, ad crastina bella parabas.

Jam post transactos vitæ regnique dolores  
 Christus ei sit vera quies, sceptrumque perenne.

*Henrici Huntingdoniensis, Hist. lib. v.*



p. 158.

O Elfreda potens, O terror virgo virorum  
 Victrix naturæ, nomine digna viri.  
 Tu quo splendidior fieres, natura puellam,  
 Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri  
 Te mutare decet sed solam, nomina sexus,  
 Tu regina potens, rexque trophæa parans.  
 Jam nec Cæsarei tantum meruere triumphi  
 Cæsare splendidior virgo virago vale. *Ibid.*

p. 179.

Auctor opum, vindex scelerum, largitor honorum,  
 Scepitriger Edgarus regna superna petit.  
 Hic alter Salomon, legum pater, orbita pacis ;  
 Quod caruit bellis claruit inde magis.  
 Templâ Deo, templis monachos, monachis dedit agros  
 Nequitia lapsus, justitiæque locum. *Ibid.*

In the quotation from William of Malmsbury, p. 176, in the last line, for "a" read "de."

The first book of this poem contains an account of the descent of St. Werburge from four royal families, her character, the history of her life and those of some of her more immediate relations ; it also relates the principal circumstances of her death and subsequent removal and condition of her body. The second book is chiefly devoted to the circumstances which connected her with the city of Chester, of which she was considered the patron saint. The author at p. 4 calls her prioress and lady of the Abbey of Chester : but she was never so, except under the general appointment of Ethelred, who made her (p. 85)

lady ruler and presydent  
 Over all the nonnes, of every monastery  
 Within his realme.

Ethelred indeed (p. 86)

Edyfyed a collage chyrche, notable and famous  
 In the subbarbes of Chester, pleasaunt and beauteous  
 In honour of God, and the Baptyst Saynt Johan,

but it does not appear that she had any authority in this establishment, and indeed this foundation had not any connexion with the Abbey of Chester.

It is probable that he calls her "Pryores" of the Abbey merely because she was enshrined there, and was considered the patroness saint of that monastery and city.

To this imputed patronage of the city and its religious establishments we doubtless owe the existence of this poem; for when the translator felt that as "a relygyous man, losynge of tyme could not him excuse, and that for avoiding such great folyshenes he ressolved

Some small treatyse to wryte brevely" p. 4.

there can be little doubt that he was led to the choice of his subject from a desire to do honour to

Blessed vyrgyn Werburge, my holy patronesse, p. 5.

indeed he acknowledges as much in his "breve conclusion,"

The cause movyng us, this werke to begyn  
 It was to avoyde, slouth and idelnes  
 And most for the love, of this holy virgin  
 Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones. p. 209.

The reader will probably not be displeased that this poem should be accompanied by Warton's criticisms and estimate of its character, which are, therefore, here quoted at length.

"Henry Bradshaw has rather larger pretensions to poetical fame than William of Nassington, although scarcely deserving the name of an original writer in any respect. Before the year 1500 he wrote the *Life of St. Werburge*, a daughter of a King of the Mercians, in English verse. This poem, beside the devout deeds and passion of the poet's patroness saint, comprehends a variety of other subjects; as a description of the kingdom of the Mercians, the lives of Saint Ethelred and Saint Werburge, the foundation of the city of Chester and a chronicle of our Kings. It is collected from Bede, Alfred of Beverley, Malmesbury, Gerardus Cambrensis, Higden's *Polychronicon*, and the *Passionaries* of the female Saints Werburgh, Ethelred and Sexburgh, which were kept for public edification in the choir of our poet's monastery. Bradshaw is not so fond of relating visions and miracles as his argument seems to promise. Although concerned with three saints, he deals more in plain facts than in the fictions of religious romance; and, on the whole, his performance is rather historical than legendary. This is remarkable in an age when it was the fashion to turn history into legend.

"His fabulous origin of Chester is not so much to be imputed to his own want of veracity as to the authority of his voucher, Ranulph Higden, a celebrated chronicler, his countryman, and a monk of his own abbey. He supposes

that Chester, called by the ancient Britons *Caer Lleon*, or, the city of legions was founded by *Leon gaur*, a giant, corrupted from *Leon vaur*, a great legion.

The founder of Chestre, as sayth Policronicon  
Was *Lleon Gauer*, a myghty stronge gyaunt  
Whiche buylded caves, and dongions many one  
No goodly buyldyng, propre ne pleasaunt — p. 148.

he adds with equal attention to etymology,

But the *Kynge Leil*, a Briton sure and valiaunt  
Was founder of Chestre, by pleasaunt buyldyng  
And of *Caerleil*, also named by the kynge. p. 148.

But a greater degree of credulity would perhaps have afforded him a better claim to the character of a poet; and, at least we should have conceived a more advantageous opinion of his imagination had he been less frugal of those traditionary fables, in which ignorance and superstition had clothed every head of his argument.

“The most splendid passage of this poem is the description of the feast (ch. xvi. pp. 58—65) made by King *Wulfer* in the Hall of the Abbey of *Ely* when his daughter *Werburge* was admitted to the veil in that monastery; among other curious anecdotes of ancient manners, the subjects of the tapestry with which the hall was hung, and of the songs sung by the minstrels on this solemn occasion, are given at large.

“If there be any merit of imagination or invention to which the poet has a claim in this description, it altogether consists in the application. The circumstances themselves

are faithfully copied by Bradshaw from what his own age actually presented. In this respect, I mean as a picture of ancient life, the passage is interesting, and for no other reason. The versification is infinitely inferior to Lydgate's worst manner.

"Bale, a violent reformer, observes that our poet was a person remarkably pious for the times in which he flourished. This is an indirect satire on the monks and on the period which preceded the Reformation. I believe it will readily be granted that our author had more piety than poetry. His prologue contains humble professions of his inability to treat lofty subjects and to please light readers."

Warton's remarks are too disparaging; Dibdin, who gives an extended account of the poem, forms a higher estimate of Bradshaw's merit. "It is presumed," he observes, "that his name will stand among the foremost in the list of the poets of the period wherein he wrote. His descriptions are oftentimes happy as well as minute; and there is a tone of moral purity and rational piety in his thoughts, enriched by the legendary lore of romance that renders many passages of his poem exceedingly interesting."

If it is not allowed to rank Bradshaw, according to Dibdin's estimate, among the foremost in the list of poets of his period, it is unjust to place him in so low a rank among his contemporaries as the severity of Warton seems to demand. There is a tone of moral principle and devotional piety so unaffectedly pervading the whole volume, and so easily and naturally introduced, as to impress the reader with the conviction that they had an

habitual influence upon his mind and heart, and exhibited themselves without an effort and almost unconsciously in all his expressions. There is much strength and apparent sincerity in his numerous exhortations to piety and devotion. In his "charitable mocion," (ch. xxii. p. 199 et seq.) he urges his readers to benevolence and to the support of the monastery, with great power, and sets before them every variety of motive that could be supposed to influence persons under the peculiar circumstances in which each might be placed. He appeals to the piety of their forefathers, and endeavours to work upon all their passions, affections and emotions, upon their love and fear, gratitude and duty. His familiarity with the Latin language has been already noticed, and the reader can scarcely have failed to observe his intimate acquaintance with the sacred writings, numerous scripture personages are adduced as models and examples of the various virtues, which adorn the christian character; and the language of scripture is constantly apparent in his exhortations and descriptions, especially where the character and acts of St. Werburge are his subjects. Moral maxims and proverbs, the concentrated wisdom of ages, seem to have been familiar to him, and may be detected in many of his pages. If

Manners maketh man

Quoth William of Wykeham,

Bradshaw observes,

by a proverbe certan

Good maners and conynge maken a man,

p. 134.

another of his proverbs is worth pointing out, as it exem-



plifies the use of the word "lad" to signify a person of low degree,

by a proverb auntyent

A lad to wedde a lady is an inconvenyent. p. 38.

The sententious brevity of a proverb is sometimes lost and weakened by adapting it to the metre of his poem ; Man proposes, God disposes, is expanded into

Tho mankynde prepose his mynde to fulfyll

Yet God dysposeth all thyng at his wyll. p. 119.

The remark of Warton is probably just, that had he had a greater degree of credulity he would have had a greater chance of being poetical ; credulity indeed does not seem to be his failing, for though he records many miracles of St. Werburge and with some appearance of belief in their reality, it is quite clear that he omits many marvellous tales, which might have been supplied by the original work, but which would be to the "reders tedious (no mervayle sothly)," and to which he was not himself quite prepared to give full credit. It is true that he gives more, many more, than sufficient to satisfy any modern readers ; but the Reformation was approaching, the shadows of coming events were already apparent, and were exerting their almost unobserved influence upon the feelings and opinions of the people, and Bradshaw had evidently less faith in the miraculous legends of his monastery, than had been enjoyed by his predecessors ; in truth there appears to be occasionally a lurking humour in his description, which betrays as much disbelief in his own narrative, as the temper of the times, and the still lingering credulity of his cotemporaries would permit. If his

own good sense and the growing enfranchisement of the period from the bondage of superstition, and papal impositions, checked in him any tendency to imaginative flights and poetic paroxysms; it will not be denied that he frequently exhibits considerable strength of expression in his language, and great powers in his vivid and graphic descriptions. A goodly specimen of railing may be found in Book I. ch. x. where St. Ermenylde, St. Werburge and her brothers severely rebuke Werbode for his "grevous presumpcyon" in aspiring to the hand of St. Werburge. Many of the miraculous cures are described with great force; and it will be difficult to find, in any cotemporary author, so lively, picturesque and humorous a narrative as that of the unhappy geese of Wedon

who went

Mekely as yf they had reason naturall

Unto her presence,

and with

Theyr wynges traylynge entred into the hall. p. 98, 99.

Had his merits as a writer been less than they really are, his meek and humble apology for his defects, which he puts forth in his "breve conclusion," would deprecate all severity of criticism. He had clearly not a musical ear, his versification is not smooth and harmonious, and his naturally defective appreciation of rhythmical intonation has been much exaggerated by the awkward and difficult arrangement of the stanza which he has adopted. With an easier metre his lines might have flowed with more ease and grace, and would have better conciliated the favour of his readers.

Rugged however and harsh as his verse may be, and low as may be the estimation of Bradshaw as a poet, the amiable and pious tone of the whole poem cannot but impress the mind with agreeable feelings, and excite admiration and affection towards him as a man and a christian.

Of Henry Bradsha, Braddshaa or Bradshaw, who calls himself, p. 3, "a religious man," *i. e.* an ecclesiastic, nothing more is known than what is recorded by Anthony Wood, who says, "he was born in the auncient town of Westchester, commonly called the city of Chester, and being much addicted to religion and learning, when a youth, was received among the Benedictine monks of St. Werburgh's monastery in the said city. Thence at riper years he was sent to Gloucester college in the suburb of Oxon, where after he had passed his course in theology among the novices of his order he returned to his cell at St. Werburge and in his elder years wrote, *De antiquitate et magnificentia urbis Cestriæ chronicon, etc.* and translated from Latin into English a book which he thus entitled, *The life of the glorious Virgin St. Werburge: Also many miracles that God had shewed for her.* London, 1521, 4to. He died in fifteen hundred and thirteen (5 Henry 8) and was buried in his monastery, leaving then behind him other matters to posterity, but the subject of which they treat I know not."—Athen. Oxon. edit. by Dr. Bliss, v. I. p. 18.

The date of his death is expressly stated in "A balade to the auctor," which is appended to the poem, by some unknown friend, and, probably, monk of the same monastery.

He laments the death of Bradshaw,

a floure most riall  
Redolent in cronicles with historical syght  
Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght  
The present yere of this translacion  
M.D.XIII. of Christis incarnation  
Cujus anime propicietur deus.

p. 210.

Of the works of Bradshaw above mentioned or alluded to, that "De antiquitate et magnificentia," etc., nothing is now known, but it is not improbable that some fragments dispersed in various MSS. descriptive of this city may have been extracted from his chronicle. The life of the glorious virgin St. Werburge is the work which is here reprinted. Of the "other matters to posterity" nothing more is positively known to us than to Wood, but Mr. Herbert was in possession of a poem, "The lyfe of St. Radegunde," also printed by Pynson, of which he says, "although the name of the author or translator of this book does not decidedly appear on the face of it, yet on comparing it with the Life of St. Werburge it may readily be perceived that both were penned by the same person, Henry Bradshaw ; but hitherto omitted in every list of his works." *Typographical Antiquities*, p. 294.

Mr Cowper in his Summary of the life of St. Werburgh quotes more than once the Latin life of this lady by Bradshaw, and these extracts he derives from Leland's Collectanea, but where this collector discovered his original authority does not appear. Mr. Cowper is probably mistaken in ascribing the work to Bradshaw's own pen ; it is much more probable

that the extracts are derived from the original chronicle or passionary, which Bradshaw translated into English verse, for he has himself distinctly stated that his poem was a translation from a Latin history preserved in his monastery ; he gives no intimation of his having written it himself, and it is also stated that the name of the original author was unknown.

Although this work is of very great rarity, it is not so much so as was at one time supposed. The earliest mention of the book, which we have discovered, is by Maittaire, who in 1741 inserts it in a list of books not before noticed. In 1749, Ames in his *Typographical Antiquities*, mentions the work, and so describes it as to leave no doubt of his having had a copy before him. Notwithstanding all this, Dr. Foote Gower in his "Sketch of Materials for the History of Cheshire" in 1771, doubts the existence of such a printed volume ; and in a subsequent advertisement, arguing upon the evidence for and against the existence of such a work, adds " no possible enquiries of mine have been able to discover the least trace of it, in any private as well as in any public repository," and closes the difficulty with the good humoured expression of Sir Roger de Coverly, " that much may be said on both sides."

There are, however, at least five copies in existence ; one is in the Minster Library at York, and my kind friend Mr. Davies informs me that it is in modern binding, that it is imperfect at the beginning, wanting the first 22 pages, the first present leaf being C. 1. on page 23, that it is otherwise

clean and in good preservation. It once belonged to Dr. Marmaduke Fothergill, and in the margin of one of the leaves near the close of the book, appears the name of Gervas Clifton, to whom it had at one time probably belonged.

Two copies are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, one of which had been purchased at Warwick, July 2, 1730, by Mr. West, at the sale of whose books in 1773, it was bought by Mr. Gough, for £2. 15s. and with the other treasures of his collection now reposes in the Bodleian.

The other copy belonging to the same library bears the autographs of former owners "Wylliã. Watson," and "Richard Cartwright," "Homfree," "William Peate," "John, and Mary Seres," and on one margin appears "John . . (cut off.)"

So God me save he is a loute  
I put you all out of doute  
By me John Beade, draper."

It was subsequently the property of Selden, from whom it passed to the Bodleian.

A fourth copy is in the British Museum. In the sale catalogue of the books of Mr. Marten of Palgrave, in lot 196, was a Life of St. Werburgh, which is supposed to be the same copy which came into the Pearson Library, which was sold in 1788, (lot 2374 the Life of St. Werburgh) and was bought by Isaac Reed for £1. 3s. At his sale in 1807 it formed lot 6972, and was purchased by I. L., i. e. I. Lochee, the auctioneer in King Street, Covent Garden, for £18. He is supposed to have purchased it for Mr. Parke, the editor and enlarger of Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors, who



afterwards sold it for 28 guineas to Mr. Heber, who inserted in the volume the following note. "This book is of the first order of rarity, not being in the Royal, British Museum, Bodleian, Spencer, Hunter, Blenheim, or Blandford collections, indeed no other copy is known to exist in any repository public or private, except one in Mr. Heber's library. Mr. Heber paid 28 guineas to Mr. P— for his copy 10 years ago, a time when 5s. went further in the purchase of a scarce book than a pound sterling does now." This note upon a scrap of paper was probably intended as a communication to some friend, perhaps to Mr. Dibdin, and, after having been copied for that purpose, was pasted into the volume as it now appears. At Mr. Heber's sale in 1834 it was purchased for the British Museum for £19. 5s.

The fifth copy is probably the one stated by Herbert, in his edition of Ames' *Typographical Antiquities*, to have been then in his own possession, and which is supposed to have passed into the hands of Mr. Woodhouse, in whose sale in 1803 it was lot 859, and was sold to Mr. Hill, the prototype of Paul Pry, for £31. 10s. This gentleman's library, rich in early poetry, was sold to Messrs. Longman, and Co., and was the foundation of their "*Bibliotheca Anglo-poetica*," in which this book was priced £63., and sold to Mr. Midgely, whose library was brought to the hammer in 1818 at Messrs. Saunders, when this rare volume was purchased by Mr. Hibbert for £42. At this gentleman's sale it was purchased by Thorpe for £19. 10s., from whom it passed to the library of Mr. Miller, the present possessor.

It may be remarked that this work is the earliest, in print, which refers to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and his dignity in the earldom, see pp. 181, 182. The passage was cited in an affidavit made in 1843 in "the Consistory Court of Chester," and appears in an Appendix to an appeal from "the Chancery Court of York, in the goods of Anne Rothwell Wignall, commonly called Anne Rothwell, Spinster, deceased, in the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council."

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The errors in this reprint that may be chargeable to the press occur at

page 18, line 9, T *read* To,  
 page 94, line 10, ha *read* had,  
 page 99, line 15, conpassyon *read* compassyon,  
 and page 112, last line but one, Gorrupte *read* Corrupte;  
 but it is to be feared that some trifling errors in transcription, such as kingdome for kyndome, befound for befounde, us for vs, would be discovered by an accurate collation. Pynson is not uniform in the use of his i, his y, and the insertion or omission of the final e.

The collation of the book is thus : it commences with the Title-page and Wood-cut of St. Werburge, The prologue of J. T. and the Table of the boke, the second Title-page, with

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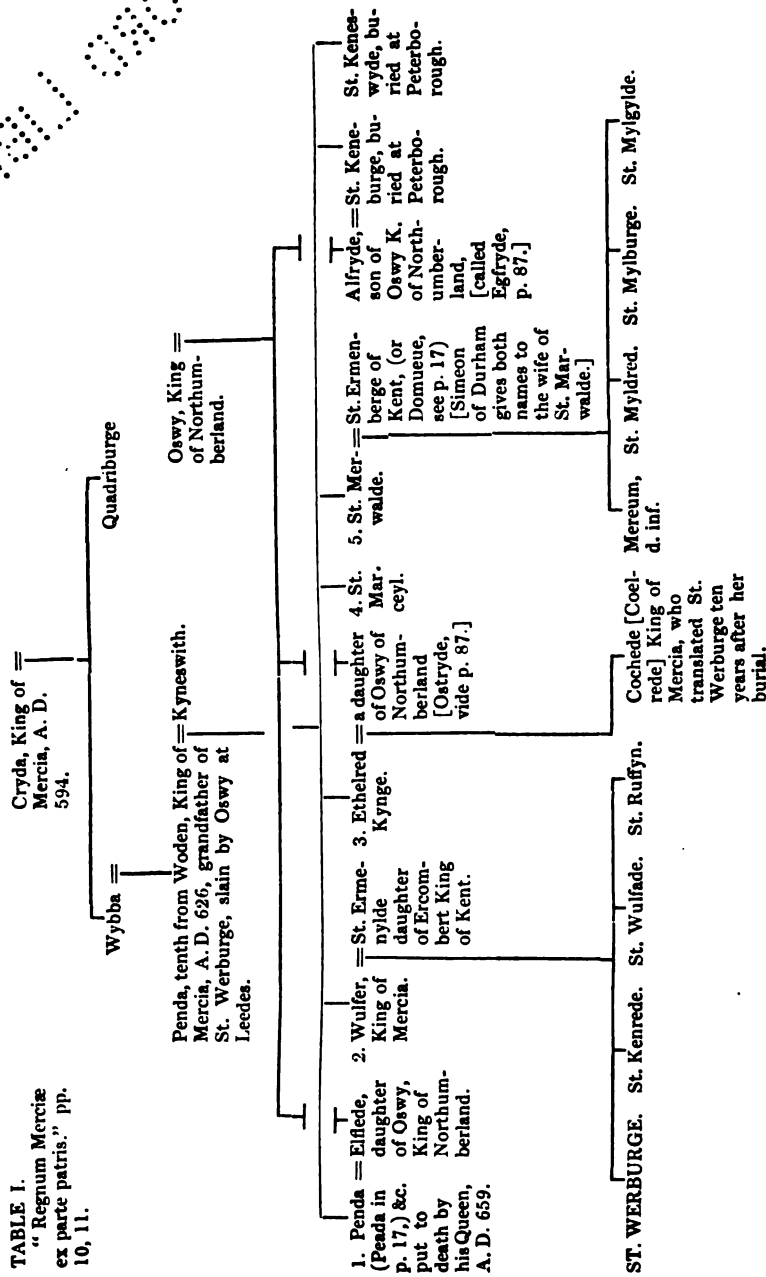
the Wood-cut repeated and reiterated at the back, and then follows the Poem, commencing with signature **a** and ending on **g iiii.**; the reverse bearing Pynson's device.

<b>a ii</b>	containing pages	1 to 14	<b>k</b>	„	„	111 to 118
<b>b</b>	„	15 — 22	<b>l</b>	„	„	119 — 134
<b>c</b>	„	23 — 38	<b>m</b>	„	„	135 — 142
<b>d</b>	„	39 — 46	<b>n</b>	„	„	143 — 158
<b>e</b>	„	47 — 62	<b>o</b>	„	„	159 — 166
<b>f</b>	„	63 — 70	<b>p</b>	„	„	167 — 182
<b>g</b>	„	71 — 86	<b>q</b>	„	„	183 — 190
<b>h</b>	„	87 — 94	<b>r</b>	„	„	191 — 206
<b>i</b>	„	95 — 110	<b>s</b>	„	„	207 — 214

A Glossary and Index are added.

The following genealogical tables are drawn up from the third chapter of the Poem, which professes to trace the descent of St. Werburge from four "Kynges of this lande, and of the riall blodde of Fraunce." Table V. has been compiled from the other four. They do not profess to be correct genealogies, nor has any attempt been made to reconcile the discrepancies which occur in various chronicles, nor even in this history. They are merely intended as aids to the reader by presenting to him, in a tabular form, that which the author gives as narrative.

TABLE I.  
"Regnum Mercie  
ex parte patris." pp.  
10, 11.



**d**

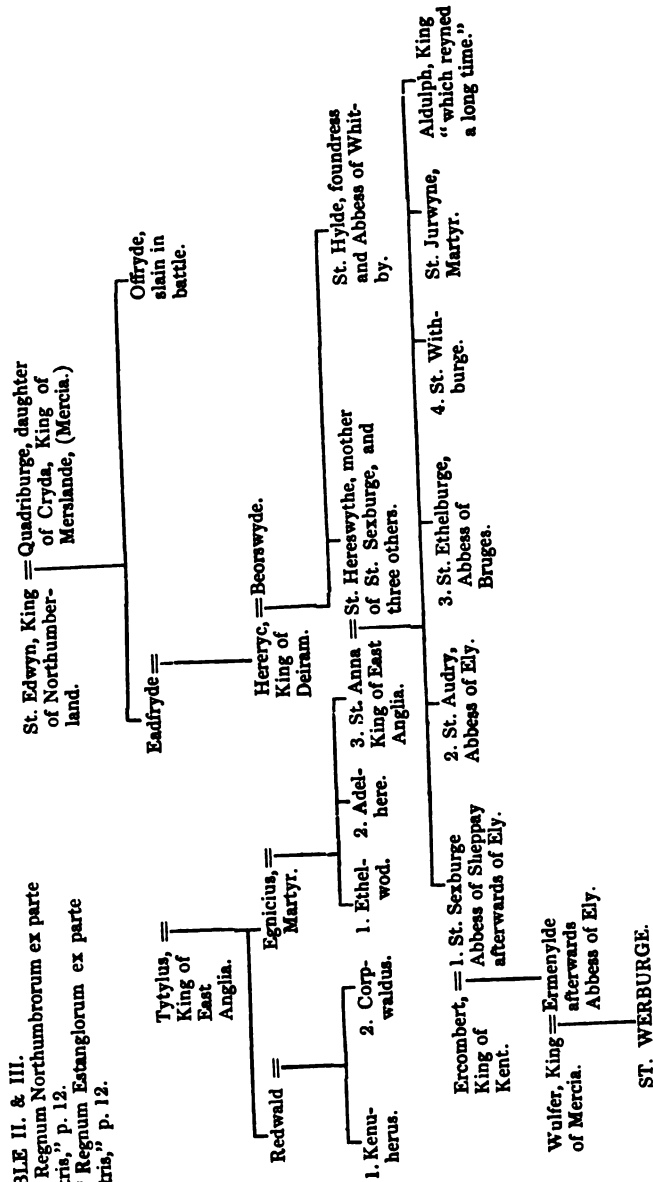
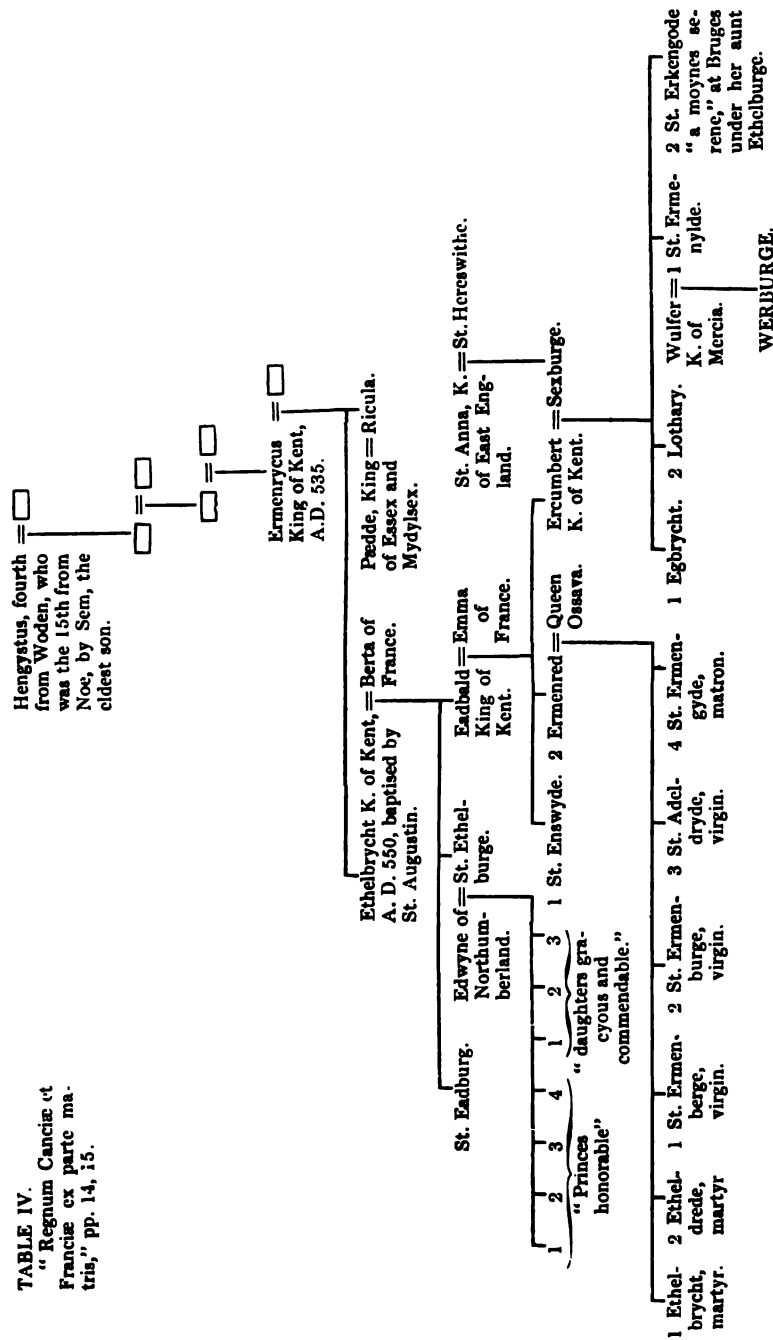


TABLE IV.



Edwyn = Quadriburge daughter of Cryda King of Mercia.

Offryde

Eadfrid =

Hereryc, = Beorswyde. King of Deiram.

St. Hyde, foundress and Abbess of Whitby, "Lady of Strengshalt, now called Whytby," p. 19.

Tyrtulus, King = of East Anglia.

Egnicius, = martyr.

St. Anna, = St. Herawythe. martyr, slain in battle.

St. Sexburge, afterwards Abbess of Sheppay, then of Ely.

Ermenryc, King of Kent = A. D. 535, great-grand-son of Hengist.

Ethelbrycht, King of Kent, AD. 556, baptised by Augustine.

Eadwald, = Emma of France. King of Kent.

Ercombert King of Kent

Wulfere, King of = Ermenyde afterwards Abbess of Ely. Mercia.

ST. WERBURGE.

Cryda, King = of Mercia, A. D. 599.

Wybba =

Penda, King of = Mercia, began to reign A.D. 626, tenth from Woden.

**ST. WERBURGE.**





**¶** Here begynneth the holy lyfe and history  
of saynt werburge / very frutefull  
for all christen people  
to rede.



**T**he prologe of J.C. in the honour & laude of saint  
Werburge / and to the prayse of y<sup>e</sup> translatour  
of the legende folowynge.

**H**onour / ioye / and glorie / the toyues organicall  
**E**ndeles myrthes w<sup>th</sup> melodies / prayse ye all y<sup>e</sup> princes  
**N**ourished in vertue / intact / as pure as cristall  
**R**elese to all synners / o werburge lady maistres  
**I**n grace thou passed / all other and in goodnes  
Whan thou was present in this mundayne lyfe  
None was the lyke / wydowe / mayde / ne wyfe

**B**y diuine grace / to vs a ryche present  
**R**eioyce we may / in Werburge one and all  
**A**gemme of vertue / a virgin resplendent  
**D**ilect of our lorde (in ioye and blis eternall  
**S**urely she is set) to intercede and call  
**H**er mouth nat cessyng / f<sup>or</sup> them to call and crye  
**A**nd in her trust / of synne to haue mercy

**O** good lady maistres / declpne thy syght afer  
And graciously beholde / thy seruaunt chaste and pure  
Henry Bradsha / sometyme monke in Chester  
Whiche only for thy loue / toke the payne and labour  
Thy legende to translate / he dyd his busy cure  
Out of latine / in Englishe rude ande and byle  
Whiche he hath amended / with many an ornate stile

Alas of Chestre / ye monkes haue lost a treasure  
Henry Bradsha / the styre of eloquence  
Chestre thou may wayle / the deth of this floure



So may the citezens / alas for his absence  
So may many other / for lacke of his sentence  
O swete lady Werburge / an holy Abbasse glorious  
Remembre Henry Bradsha / thy seruaunt most gracio<sup>s</sup>

In hym remainned no vice ne presumption  
Enuy and wrath / from hym were expyled  
Slouth ne Venus in hym had no dominion  
Auarice and glotony / he bitterly expelled  
No vice in hym reigned / his felowes he excelled  
As cleene as cristall / he bare these vertues thre  
Chastite / obidience / and wylfull pouerte

O cruell deth / whiche art the perfit ende  
Of this noble clerke / and euery mortall thyng  
Agaynst the / no man may hym defende  
Thou causest wo / langour / and anguissyng  
And who on this / wolde haue remembryng  
Howe from erth / to erth he must agayne  
He wolde dispise all thynges that be mundayne. Vale.

The table of this boke.

**F**irst the prologue of the translatour of this litell  
treatyse Cap.i.

**C**A description of the realme of merciēs of the boūdes  
and commodites of the same Cap.ii.

**C**A description of the geanologie of saynt Werburge  
and howe she descended of .iiii. kynges of this lāde / and  
of the riall blodde of fraunce Cap.iii.

C ii.

**C** A playn descripcion of the actz and chivalry of kyng  
Penda graūtfather to saynt Werburge / and of his no-  
ble and vertuous progenie. Ca.iiii.

**C** Howe after the deth of kyng Pēda / and of his prince  
Pēda his secōde son Wulfer father of saynt Werburge  
was elect to be kyng of merciens. Cap.b.

**C** A lyttell descripcyon of the noble maryage bytwene  
kyng Wulfer and saynt Ermenild, the kyngz doughter  
of Kent / and of the solempnite done at the same season  
The syxt chapitre.

**C** A breue declaracion of the holy lyfe and conuersaciō  
of saynt Werburge / bled in her tender youth / aboue the  
comon cours of nature. Cap.bii.

**C** Howe this yonge virgin saynt Werburge was desi-  
red of dukes and erles in mariage / and of the reasona-  
ble answer she gaue to them in auoydyng suche word-  
ly pleasures. Cap.biii.

**C** Howe the false Werebode despyred kyng Wulfer to  
haue his doughter Werburge in mariage / and howe he  
graunted therunto. Cap.ix.

**C** Howe the quene saynt Ermenild, wolde nat consent  
therto / & how her betherne saynt Wulfade / and Ruffin  
were agaynst the sayd mariage. Cap.x.

**C** How the false Werebode complaynned vpon saynt



**Wulfade & Ruffyn to kyng Wulfer/and was the cause  
of their deth.** Cap.xi.

**C** Howe kyng Wulfer was conuerted / and toke great  
repentaunce for his offence . and by the counsell of saint  
Ceade was a deuout man / and a good benefactour to  
holy churche/and founder of diuers places Cap.xii.

**C** Of the feruent desire & singular deuocion saynt Wer-  
burge had to be religious / and of the dayly supplicaci-  
ons she made to her father for the same. Cap.xiii.

**C** Of the reasonable & meke answere saynt Werburge  
gaue to her father/whan he moued her to haue ben ma-  
ried. Cap.xiiii.

**C** How saint Werburge was made an nōne at Ely aft-  
her desire vnder saint Audri lady and abbasse. Ca.xv.

**C** Of the great solemnifacion kyng Wulfer made at y<sup>e</sup>  
gostly mariage of saynt Werburge his dought at Ely /  
to all his louers and frendes. Cap.xvi.

**C** Of the holy profession and gostly cōuersacion saynt  
Werburge bled at Ely i religio bnd<sup>e</sup> saint Audri. xvii.

**A** litell treatise of the lyfe of saynt Audrie abbasse of  
Ely / & of her holy conuersacion & great deuocion which  
Audrie was aunt and colyn to saynt Werburge. xviii.

**C** A breue reherfal of the lyfe of saint Serburge graūt  
C.iii.

moder to saint werburge / & of her comyng to Ely to her  
syst Audrie thabbasse from Shepay monasterie. c.xix.

¶ Howe saint Ermenild, after dethe of kyng Mulser  
was made a noune at Ely / vnder her moder Serburge  
and Werburge her doughter. Cap.xx.

¶ Howe kyng Ethelrede seynge the holy conuersaciō  
of Werburge his nece / made her lady and president at  
Medon / Trentā / & Hambury. Also by her example and  
counsel made hym a monke at Bardeney abbay. c.xxi.

¶ The holy cōuersaciō of kyng Kered brother to saynt  
Werburge / & howe he refused his crowne / & was made  
a monke at Rome / & there deptyed a holy cōfessour. xxii.

¶ Of the gostly deuociō of saynt Werburge & bertuo<sup>r</sup>  
gouernans of her places / and of the great humilite she  
blyd to her systers and all creatures. Ca.xxiii.

¶ Howe at Medō wilde gyle were pynned at her cōmā-  
dement / and also relested & put at liberte. Ca.xxiiii.

¶ How a tyrande without pite was punysshed his face  
set backward / and by his mekenes was restaured to  
helth and prosperite agayne. Cap.xxv.

¶ How deuers princes folowynge sensualite entedyng  
to violate this virgine by power : by myracle were put  
to confusion. Cap.xxvi.

¶ How saynt Werburge gaue knowlege to her systers



of her departure / & howe she ordred in vertue her sayd  
monasteries after her departure. Cap.xxvii.

¶ Of the gostly exortaciō saint Werburge made to her  
systrs in her sekenes / and howe deuoutly she receyued  
the sacramētes of holy churche afore her deth. c.xxviii.

¶ Of the departure of saynt Werburge at Crētā vnto  
heuen frō this miserable lyfe / & what lamētacion her sy-  
sters and subiectes made for her deth. Ca.xxix.

¶ Howe the hāburgenz toke the blessed body of Wer-  
burge frō Trentā by myracle & brought it to Hābury /  
and of the buriall of this virgin / and manyfolde signes  
shewed of god by her merites / the space of .ix. yere afore  
her translacon. Cap.xxx.

¶ A litel breue treatise of her hole lyfe / and how for her  
myracles shewed after her deth / the couent of Hamburi  
purposed to trāslat her body by helpe of kyng Coelrede  
reignyng in mercelande. Ca.xxxi.

¶ The solempne translacon of this glorious virgine  
saynt Werburge . and of the great myracles done at the  
same season by the might of god / and merite of this gra-  
cious lady. Ca.xxxii.

¶ Howe the body of saynt Werburge continued hole /  
& substācial at Hambury after y<sup>e</sup> trāslacion by the space  
of .CC. yeres / tyll the danes were comon to this lande /  
or it fell & resolued was vnto powder. Cap.xxxiii.





**H**ere foloweth the lyfe of the glory-  
ous virgyn saynt werbnrge / also  
many miracles that god hath  
shewed for her / & fyrst the  
prologe of the au-  
ctour.



Speculum salutis the life of the glorie  
our heavenly father we praye also  
many miracles that god hath  
performed for us & for the





**T**he prologe of the translatour of this lytell werke y<sup>e</sup>  
lyfe of saynt Werburge.

**W**hā Phebus had roñe his cours ī sagittari  
And Capricorne entred a sygne retrograt  
Amyddes Decēbre / y<sup>e</sup> ayre colde & frosty  
And pale Lucyna / the erthe dyd illumynat  
I rose bp shortly / fro my cubycle preparat  
Aboute mydnyght / and cast in myne intent  
How I myght spende / the tyme conuenient.

I called vnto mynde / the great vnstedfastnes  
Of this wretched worlde / not by cours of nature  
How there be brought / some men to busynes  
Oppressed with pouerte / langour / and dyspleasure  
Some other exalted / to felycyte and pleasure  
The maker of mankynde / most in maieste  
Ruleth all at his wyll / it may non other be.

Beholde dyscretly / and se the fyrmament  
Consyder the sonne / and the mone also  
With all the planettes / and sterres resplendent  
How they kepe theyr cours / bothe to and fro  
Euer obedyent / theyr creature vnto  
And byrdes besely syngyng euey day  
Praysyng theyr prymate all that they may.

The iiii elementes / in lyke condycyon  
The fyre / the water / the ayre / and the londe  
Obyserben theyr duty / after theyr creacyon  
And burum ben / and euer so be sonde  
Thus euey creature / as we understonde  
Werburge

Obegeth to his creature / with humylyte  
Except dyslolute man / folowynge sensualyte.

If man wyll remembre / how he was create  
To the lykenes and figure / of god almyghty  
And set in paradysse / a place moost delycate  
To haue the fruytyon / of eternall glory /  
If not synne expulsed hym / to the bale of mysery  
But that he wolde enclyne / his naturall reason  
To serue his maker / truely at due season.

Dyuers people / haue dyuers condicions  
Comynly proued / it is euery day  
Some set to vertu / and good disposicions  
In penaunce / prayer / all that they may  
Some in contemplacyon / the sothe to say  
Some in abstynence / to chastyce the body  
And make it subget / to the soule persytely.

Some other reioyce / in synne and ydelnes  
Some seruauntes to Venus / both day and nyght  
Other to couetyse / and worldly besynes  
Some to deceyue / by subtylte in syght  
Some vnto marchandyse / & wyunnyng full ryght  
Some ferefull and tymorous / without audacyte  
Some sadde and sobre / and of great grauyte.

Many haue pleasure to speke of rybaudry  
Some of syghtynge / braulyng / and actes marcyall  
Other to flater / and paynt the company  
Some to syt bytwene the cuppe and the wall  
Some to blasphemie / and dyssemble withall



To backbyte and sclaūder / by malyce and envy  
Some to extorcyon / thefte and playne robry.

Thus after fraylte / and sundry compleccyons  
Dyuers men dyuers in lyuyng there be  
Dysposed by a contrary dysposycyon  
Some vnto vertue / some vnto vanyte  
Many maners of people / now we may se  
Wauerynge in the worlde / without quyetnes  
As a shyp by tempest / is dryuen doubtles.

Whan I reuolued / with due circumstance  
The dyuers maners / and mutabylte  
Of worldly people / and the great varyaunce  
And how this lyfe / is of no suerte  
Now in great langour / now in prosperyte  
Yet after our meryte / we shal be sure  
To be rewarded / at our departure.

Chan to vertuuous labours / we shulde apply  
And spende not our tyme / all in ydlenes  
For as a byrde is made / by nature to fly  
Ryght so we shulde vse / some good busynes  
To our soule helthe / with great mekenes  
For tyme euyl spende in labours bayne  
Is harde to be well / recouered agayne

But now syth I am / a relygyous man  
For losynge of tyme / can not me excuse  
Therefore I purpose / to do as I can  
All suche ydlenes / whylom to refuse  
With the grace of god / the tyme for to vse  
Werburge.

Some small treatyse / to wryte breuely  
To the comyn bulgares theyr mynde to satysfy.

To descrybe hye hystories / I dare not be so bolde  
Syth it is a mater / for clerkes conuenient  
As of the. vii. aeges / and of our parentes olde  
Or of the. iiii. empyres / whylom moost excellent  
Knowynge my lernynge / therto insuffycient  
As for bawdy balades / ye shall haue none of me  
To excyte lyght hertes / to pleasure and banyte.

But now in auoydynge / suche great folysshenes  
I purpose to wryte / a legende good and true  
And translate a lyfe / into Englyshe doubtles  
I meane the spouse / of our lorde Ihesu  
Blessed saynt Werburge / replete with vertue  
A noble prynces borne / & byrgyne pure and gloriouse  
After an holy monyall / and an abbesse gracyous.

In the abbay of Chestre / she is thryned ryche  
Pryores and lady / of that holy place  
The chyef protectryce / of the sayd monastery  
Longe before the conquest / by deuynne grace  
Protectryce of the Cytee / she is and euer was  
Called specyall prymate / and pryncypall presydent  
There rulyng vnder / our lorde omnyppotent.

And yf I unworthy / begynne this lytell werke  
I praye all the reders / mekely of pardon  
To correcke and amende / syth I am no clerke  
Excuse my ignoraunce / and take the entencion  
My mynde is to shewe / her lyfe and deuocyon



That euery man and woman / ensample maye take  
At this pure byrgyn / synne to forsake.

And syth that she is in blysse now glorified  
It were no reason / her name be had in scyence  
But to the people / her name be magnified  
To her laude and prayse / honour and reuerence  
Her parentes and bretherne / y<sup>e</sup> floures of experyence  
Haue ben kepte in close / secrete many a day  
Wherefore I purpose / somewhat of them to say.

Fyrst I entende / to make playne descripcyon  
Of her fathers kyngedome the realme of Mercyens  
How longe it endured / under his tycyon  
Under how many kynges / it had prehemynens  
Also of her petygre / the noble excellence  
For so many sayntes / of one kynred certayne  
Is harde to be founde / in all the worlde agayne.

Unto this rude werke / myne auctours these shalbe  
Fyrst the true legende / and the venerable Bede  
Mayster Alfrydus and Wyllyam Malysburge  
Gyrarde / Polycronycon / and other mo in deed  
Now glorious god / graunt me to procede  
Blessed byrgyn Werburge / my holy patronesse  
Helpe me to endyte / I praye the swete maystresse.

**C**A descripcyon of the realme of Mercyens / of bondes  
and commodytes of the same.

The yere of our Sauyoure / by full cumpulacyon  
foure hundred / nyne & fourty frome his natiuite  
Werburge.

a. iiii.



As venerable Bede / maketh declaracyon  
Duke Hengyst came to this lande in great royalte  
With Saxons / Angles / Jutes / thre people myghtye  
Desyred by Mortyger / than kyng of Brytons  
Came to defende / fro greuous oppressyons.

Also the yeres of our blessed sauyoure  
Syre hundreth foure score and nyne expresse  
The Brytons were expulsed / so sayth myne auctoure  
From Englande to walles / with great wretchydnes  
In Englande than ruled / seuen kynges doubtles  
Whose names we purpose / to shewe with lycens  
But pryncypally / of the kingdome of Mercyens.

The fyrst realme of Saxons / began in Kent  
The yere of grace / foure hundreth fyue and fyfty  
Where duke Engystus / in honour excellent  
With sceptre and crowne / fyrst reygned royally  
The seconde was Southsex / sayth the hystory  
Where Adla and Ella / reygned full ryght  
Whiche realme endured / but short tyme in myght.

The thyrde was West saxons / famous and myghty  
Where fyrst reygned kyng Cerdicus  
The yere of our lorde / fyue hundreth one and twenty  
Whiche realme by procelle / and power byctoryous  
Subdued all other / to hym full memorous  
The pryncypall Cytees / of his regalyte  
Were in olde season / Wynchester and Salesburge.

The fourth was Essex / where duke Erchenwyn  
Fyrst reygned kyng / hauynge domynacyon

By the Kyng of Merselande / brought ofte to ruine  
The chyet Cytee was Colchester / of his domynyon  
Also of eest Englande / was the fyfth kyngdome  
Where Asa crowned / had fyrst the sufferaynte  
Of Northfolke and Southfolke / knowen in certayne.

The fyrthe was the kyngdome of Merlande  
Where Cryda was crowned fyrst by auctoryte  
Hauynge nyne thyres / obedyent to his hande  
As after shall appere / more euydent to be  
The seuenth was Northüberlande / vnder Ida & Alle  
Whylom dyuyded / in sondry kyngdomes twayne  
The chye Cytee was yorke / wher y<sup>e</sup> kyng dyd reygne.

The realme of Mercyens / by olde antyquyte  
As playnly declareth / Polycronycon  
Thre hundreth yeres / endured in auctoryte  
Under eyghtene kynges / worthy nomynyon  
Greatest of gouernaunce of all this regyon  
Where Wulfer reygned / a kyng byctoryous  
Father to saynt Werburge / byrgyn moost glorpyous.

The boundes and lorchyppes / of the sayd Mercyens  
As shewen dyuers bokes hystoryall  
Were large and myghty / and of great prehemynens  
Where the sayd kyng reygned by power impervall  
This realme to dyscrybe / begyn we shall  
At the Cytee of Chester / and the water of Dee  
Bytwene Englande and wales / of the west partye

And so transcendynge / by towarde Shrewysbury  
By the water of Sabryne / vnto Brystowe



The East see mesureth / the East parte truely  
The water of Chamys / the south parte doth she we  
Flowynge vnto London / whoso dothe it knowe  
The water of Humber was on the north syde  
With the water of Mersee / theyr landes to dryde.

Of the foresayd ryuer / and water of Mersee  
The kynge of Mercys / taketh his name  
As moost sure drydent / to be had in memorye  
Mesuryng and metynge / the bondes with great fame  
Of Mersee and Northumberlande / kynges of the same  
Bitwene cheshyr and lācashyr theyr kīngdomes certayne  
As auneynt Cronycles descryben it full playne.

The sayd myghty kyngdome / of Mercys dyd holde  
Many noble Cytees / with townes and burghes royall  
Whiche Penda optayned / enlarged manyfolde  
As Chester / Stafford / Litchefelde / Couētre memorall  
Lyncolne and Hentyngdon / Northampton withall  
Leicester and Derby / Cambridge and Dronforde  
Worcester and Brystowe / with other mo & Herforde

Many royall ryuers / were conteyned in the same  
With sundry kyndes of fyshes / swete and delycious  
It were tedyous to she we / of them the dryers name  
In ryuers and in pooles / swymynge full plentuous  
Also forestes / parkes / chases large and beauteous  
And all beestes of venery / pleasaunt for a kynge  
To cours at lyberte / befound there pasturyng

Also this royall realme / holdeth as we fynde  
Habundaunce of fruytes / pleasaunt and profytable

Great plente of cornes / and graynes of euery kynde  
With hylles / baleys / pastures / comly and delectable  
The soyle and glebe / is set plentuous and comendable  
In all pleasaunt propurtes / no part of all this lande  
May be compared / to this foresayd Mercelande.

The people of Mercyens / the trouthe yf we dare saye  
Lordes / barons / knyghtes / with all the comunete  
In musture and in batayle / euer the pryce haue they  
The kynges grace to serue / moost balpaut in artylere  
In all actes Marcyall / euer hauryng the byctorye  
With herte / mynde and harneys / redy day and nyght  
Theyr enemyes to subdue / by power mayne & myght.

If they be well ordred / bnder a sure capytayne  
And set to suche busynesse / theyr honour to auauunce  
The tryumph they optayne / knowen it is certayne  
In Englade and Scotlande / & in the realme of Fraunce  
Fewe of them haue cou tred / by manhode & baleaunce  
Great nombre of enemyes / with knyghthode & polycy  
We meane them moost specyall / in the West party.

Many other commodytes / pleasures and propriytes  
This sayd realme / holdeth of olde antyquyte  
In royalties and lordshyppes / landes and lybertes  
Honourably dylated / in worthyp and polyce  
Flouryng in wysedome / honours and chyualre  
Aeryfyed by kynges Offa / moost myghty and excellent  
Proued in his actes / by playne experyment

This Offa subdued / in hystory as is founde  
The kynges of Westsaxons / Northumberlande & Kent



Droue Brytons to wales / out of this lande  
And made a depe dytche / for a sure dyuydent  
Bytwene Englande and Wales / & to this day presente  
Is called dytche Offa / so that no Bryton  
On payne of punysshement / shulde entre this regyon.

Kynge Offa traſlated / as ſayth Polycronycon  
By myghty power / the ſee of Canterbury  
Unto Lychefelde chyrche / with famous oblacyon  
For euer to continu / confirmed by auctoryte  
Also he founded / ſaynt Albans monaſterye  
Fyrſt of deuocyon / to Rome gaue Peter pens  
Thus royall ſomtyme / was the realme of Mercyens.

¶ A deſcrypcyon of the Geanalogy of ſaynt Werburge  
and how ſhe descended of foure kynges of this lande / &  
of the royall blode of fraunce.

¶ Regnum Merc. ex pte pris.

**T**his noble prynces / the doughter of Syon  
The floure of vertu / and byrgyn glorious  
Blessed Saynt Werburge / full of deuocyon  
Descended by auncetry / and tytle famous  
Of foure myghty kynges / noble and byctoryous  
Keynyng in this lande / by true ſucceſſyon  
As her lyfe hystoryall / maketh declaracyon.

The yere of our lorde / frome the natyurte  
Fyue hundreth. xiiii. and also. iiii. ſcore  
Whan Austyn was ſende / frome ſaynt Gregorpe  
To conuert this regyon / vnto our ſauyoure  
The noble kinge Cyda / than reygned with honoure

Upon the mercyens / whiche kynge was father  
Unto kynge Wybba / and Quadriburge his syster.

This Wybba gate Penda / kynge of mercyens  
Whiche Penda subdued / fyue kynges of this regyon  
Reygnyng thyrty yere / in worshyp and reuerens  
Was grauntfather to Werburge / by lynyall successyon  
By his quene Kyneswith / had a noble generacyon  
Fyue baleant prynces / Penda and kynge Wulfer /  
Kynge Ethelred / saint Marceyl / saint marwalde i fere.

And two holy doughters / blessed and vertuous  
Saynt Keneburge / and saynt Keneswyde the byrgyn  
Whiche ladyes were buryed / full memorous  
At peturborowe abbay / and now there lye in shryne  
The sayd kynge Ethelrede / by sufferaunce deuyne  
Had a prynce Cochede / whiche after reygned kynge  
That translated Werburge / the .x. yere of her buryenge.

Saynt Merwalde specyfied / vnclie to saint Werburge  
By his quene saint Ermeberge a prynces doughter of kent  
Gate.iii. holy byrgyns / saint myldred & saint mylburge  
Saynt Aylgyde the thyde / of vertu equypolent  
With a sone Mereum / whiche frome the holy sacramēt  
Of baptym was taken / by myracle expresse  
To the blys of heuen / to reygne there endelesse.

The seconde sone of Penda / we meane kynge Wulfere  
A noble balyant prynce / by lynyall dyscent  
Reygnyng vpon the Mercyens with royalte & power  
Married saynt Ermenylde / y<sup>e</sup> kynges doughter of kent  
Where throughe the grace of god omnyppotent



They had fayre yssue / saynt Werburge / saynt Kenrede  
Saynt wulfade / saynt Kuffyn / in story as we rede.

**C** Regnum Northumborum /  
Ex parte matris.

The secōde realme of whō saynt Werburge dyd descēde  
Was of saynt Edwyn / kynge of Northumberlande  
Whiche maryed Quadyrburge / his ryghtes to defende  
Doughter of Tryda / kynge of Merlande  
Bytweene them descended / as we vnderstande  
Two comly prynces / the fyrst we call Cadfyde  
The secōde sone in batayle slayne was named Offfyde

Kynge Cadfyde gate Hererc y<sup>e</sup> was kynge of Deiram  
This Hererc by Beorlwyde his quene fayre & fre  
Had saynt Hylde the abbesse / saynt Bede sayth y<sup>e</sup> same  
Lady also foundresse / of the abbay of Whytbye  
This sayd kynge Hererc / had another lady  
The quene of eest Englāde / saynt Herlwith she hyght  
Mother to saynt Serburge / & thre other ladies bryght.

This holy Serburge / full of grace and goodnes  
Was maryed to Ercombert / a noble kynge of Kent  
Bytwyx them descended / a precyous ryches  
The blessyd Ermenylde / humble and pacient  
Whiche for her bertue / was maryed full excellent  
To Wulfer kynge of Merciens / with great solempnyte  
And mother was to Werburge / a swete floure of chastite

**C** Regnum Estanglorum /  
ex parte matris.

The thyrde noble kyngedome / of her parentage  
Was the realme of east England / whylom i great degre  
Tytylus kyng of the same / byctoryous and sage  
Gat Redwald his fyrst sone / a chrysten prynce was he  
This Redwalde had.ii. sones / flouryng in chynalye  
The fyrst was Kenuherus / a noble man of fame  
The seconde Corpwaldus / called by his name.

This foresayd kyng Tytylus / had a seconde sone  
Called Egnicius / accepted as a martyre  
Whiche sayd Egnicius / by lynyall progressyon  
Had.iii. noble prynces / that worthy euer were  
The fyrst was called Ethelwod / y<sup>e</sup> seconde Adelhere  
The thyrde was saynt Anna / a kyng moost vertuouse  
In batayle slayne bryghtfully / now a martyr gloypo<sup>9</sup>

This forsayd kyng Anna / maryed as we rede  
The holy prynces Heselwith / for loue and amyte  
They had a noble yssue / to encrease theyr mede  
The blessed Serburge / saynt Audry of Elye  
Saynt Ethelburge the thyrd / in Byges now lyeth she  
Saynt Withburge the.iiii. y<sup>e</sup> martyr saynt Furwyne  
And Aldulph after kyng / which regned a lōge tyme.

The lady saynt Serburge / eldest of them all  
A gracypus matrone / enduryng all her lyfe  
Was maryed to Ercombert / y<sup>e</sup> kyng of Kent royall  
They brought fourth a progeny / noble to dyscryue  
The blessed Ermenylde / vertuouse mayd and wyfe  
Whiche lady was mother / by grace of god almyght  
Unto blessed Werburge / our confort and our lyght.



**C** Regnum Cancie et francie / ex parte matris.

The.iiii. myghti kyngdome / of whom this royal p̄ices  
Saynt Werburge descended / was the realme of kent  
Where reygned fyrst Hengystus / by vycory & prowes  
Whiche was the fourth man / by lygnage euident  
Procedynge fro Woden / a prynce full prepotent  
Of whom our p̄genytours / Angles / Jutes / & Saxons  
Lynpally succeded / kynges of dyuers nacyns.

This foresayd prynce Wode / as dyuers auctours sayne  
Was the .xb. frō Noe / by naturall progressyon  
Of his eldest sone Sem / descendynge playne  
In saxons tongue Geaf / after ryte and custome  
Not of the lygne of Japhet / by theyr opynyon  
Retourne we to Hengyst / and to his successoures  
And speke of theyr royalte / to please the audytoures.

Ermenrycus kyng of kent / reygned with great power  
The yere of our sauoure / fyue hundreth fyue & thyrte  
Unto whome Engystus was great graundfather  
This sayd kyng Ermenryc / had yssue fayre and fre  
A doughter called Ricula / which married was to fledde  
Of Essex and Mydylsex / gouernoure and kyng  
Of whom a myghty kynred / by proces was comynge.

This Ermenryc gate Ethelbryct full vertuouse  
Whiche kyng reygned in kent / the yere of our sauour  
Fyue hundreth fyue & fyfty / & baptysed was gracypus  
By blessyd bysshop Austyn / of Englade called doctour  
He was fyrst cysten kyng / & pryncypall protectour  
Of the sayth within this lande / and founder was also

Of dyuers holy places / and monasteryes both tow.

This sayd kyng Ethelbyc / for the great habundaunce  
Of ryches and honour / was maryed solemply  
To the prynces Berta / the kynges doughter of ffraunce  
And of them proceded a vertuous progeny  
Eadburg & Ethelburg saintes / whiche Ethelburg truly  
By Edwyne kyng of North / had.iiii. prces honorable  
And.iii. holy doughters / gracious and commendable.

Also kyng Ethelbyct / had to his successoure  
Kyng Eadbalde / in Kent reygnyng a longe space  
He maryed lady Emma / of fraunce the chosen floure  
And by her had yssue / saynt Enswyde full of grace  
Also pryncce Ermenred his seconde sone / whiche wace  
Maryed to quene Osaua / of them dyd procede  
Two holy martyrs / Ethelbyct and Etheldrede.

This pryncce Ermenred / had.iiii. ladyes byght  
Lyke the.iiii. floodes of Paradyse / chynnyng in vertu  
The eldest of the systers / saynt Ermenberge byght  
The seconde saynt Ermenburge / the spouses of Ihesu  
The thyrde saynt Adeldryde / all byces dyd subdu  
The.iiii. saynt Erme gyde / sayth they lyues hystoryall  
Thre of them holy byrgyns / the fourth matrone we call

This foresayd Eadbalde / a souerayne myghty kyng  
By Emma of ffraunce / had to his enherytoure  
The noble kyng Ercumbert / full gracious in luyng  
Whiche maryed Serburge / with worshyp & honoure  
The kynges doughter of east England specyfied afore  
This pryncce loued vertue / prayer and deuocyon  
Serburge  
b i.



Commaūdyng all his realme / to kepe y<sup>e</sup> fast of Lenton.

Ercombert. xxx. yere / regnyng in his regaly  
Had a noble progeny / in grace and all goodnes  
His prynce hyght Egbyct / his seconde sone Lothary  
Whiche prynce reygned but ten yere / kyng expresse  
Lothary succeded hym / raynyng. xii. yeres doubtlesse  
Also he had two doughters / saynt Ermenylde y<sup>e</sup> quene  
The other hyght saynt Erhengode / a moyne serene.

This lady Ermenylde / was marryed royally  
To the aforelayd Aulfer / kyng of Mercyens  
Bytwene them descended / full graciously  
A noble Margaryte / of hye magnyfycens  
A roose of Paradyse / full of prehemynens  
Moost blessed Werburge / the gemme of holynes  
Our synguler suffrage / and sterre of our clerenes.

**C**A descrypcyon of the actes & chyualry of kyng Penda  
graundfather to saynt Werburge / & of his noble and  
vertuous yssue and progenye. Ca. iiii.

**T**he yere of grace. bi. c. fyre and twenty  
The forelayd prynce Pēda / began for to reygne  
The tenth man frō Woden / a prynce in Saxony  
Sone and heyre to Wybbe / sayth myne auctour playne  
Fyfty yeres of aege / that tyme he was certayne  
Whan he was fyrst crowned / kyng of Mercyens  
Thyrt yeres he reygned / with great reuerens.

fyue kynges in batayle / this Penda dyd subdue  
Saintes Edwyn & Oswald / kynges of Northūberlāde

With Sygebert / Egnycius / and Anna full of vertu  
Thre noble kynges / regnyng in east Englande  
With helpe of Brytones / by Bede we vnderstande  
Dylated his regyon / with worshyp and honoures  
More more than dyd / any of his predecessoures.

He maryed Keneswith / a lady fayre and bryght  
And by her had yssue / a goodly generacyon  
Peada his prynce / Aulfer a noble knyght  
Saynt Ethelred / and Alerwalde full of deuocyon  
Also saynt Aersellyn / of holy conuersacyon  
Saynt Keneburge / also saynt Keneswyde  
Auntess to saynt Aerburge / upon the fathers syde.

Thre of his chyldren / as we vnderstande  
Prynce Peada / Kyneburge / and Ethelrede  
He maryed with Oswy / kynge of Northumberlande  
Co.iii. of his yssue / for loue and for mede  
Aulfer and Alerwalde / the story sayth in dede  
Were maryed vnto / the royall blode of Kent  
To Ermenylde and Domueue / two ladyes excellent.

Soone after by grace / the myddyll parte of Mercens  
Under prynce Peada / were baptyfed euery chone  
Whiche Peada maryed / Elfede with reuerens  
Doughter vnto Oswy / kynge of the North regyon  
Peada therto graunted / without contradyccon  
Under a fre lycence / his people were at lyberte  
Within all his regyon / baptyfed for to be.

Also prynce Alfryde / sone to kynge Oswy  
Maryed saynt Keneburge / syster to prynce Peada  
Aerburge b.ii.



Whiche sayd Deada / brought from the north party  
foure holy preestes / Ced / Beccy / and Adda  
To preche to his people / the fourth was Durna  
Whiche.iiii. selden ceased / day / nyght nor tyme  
To conuert the people / vnto chrystes doctryne.

Kynge Penda consented / as afore is sayd  
And permytted doctours / to preche in euery place  
Throughout his realme / and neuer it denayed  
E baptyse his subgettes / by fayth and ghostly grace  
He ayded them with socour / and helpe in that case  
That wolde be conuerted / for theyr synguler mede  
As sayth myne auctour / the venerable Bede.

But by the temptacyon / of our ghostly enemy  
This sayd kynge Penda / this byctoryous knyght  
Of valpaunt men in armure / rayled a great company  
And to the North parties went / purposyng to fyght  
And cruelly to flee / by power / mayne / and myght  
The foresaid kynge Oswy / as he afore had slayne  
Sayt Oswalde his brother / kynge and martyr playne.

Shortly was forgotten / the fauour of his affynyte  
That fully was cōtracte / bytwene these kynges twayne  
Joyned at the maryages / of theyr chyldren the  
Euer to haue endured / in loue by reason playne  
yet Oswy offered Penda / many ryche gyftes certayne  
To auoyde his malyce / and for to kepe the peas  
Whiche Penda refused / replete with wychednes.

Bytwene these.ii. kynges / was a strōge myghty batell  
Not ferre from yorke / ny the flood of Wylwed

In the regyon of Leedes / where by fortune cruell  
Kynge Penda perished / a carefully was leed  
And. xxi. dukes with hym / were slayne and leste deed  
The kynge Oswy offered gladly / with good entent  
His yonge doughter Edelred / to god omnyotent.

He set her for doctryne / to the abbesse saynt Hylde  
Lady of Strenyghalt / now called Whytby  
And gaue. xii. possessyons / a monastery to buylde  
Whiche place is from yorke / myles thyrty  
He gaue great landes / to his sone in lawe Deade  
But the thyrde yere after / this sayd prynce was slayne  
By treason of his wyfe Elleda / for certayne.

**C** Now after dethe of Penda & his sone prynce Deada  
his seconde sone Uulfer / father to saynt Werburge was  
electe to be kynge of all the Mercyens. Ca. b.

**A**fter that this Penda / of Mercyens kynge  
In batayle by kynge Oswy / cruelly was slayne  
And his prynce Deada / after hym thre yeres reygnyng  
Was put vnto deth / by his quene in certayne  
These people of Mercyens / rebelled soze agayne  
The foresayd Oswy / kynge of Northumberlande  
And hym refused / as ye shall vnderstande.

All the sayd Mercyens / by a generall counsell  
Fortyfied themselfe / with power myght and reason  
And crowned prynce Uulfer / as Bede doth vs tell  
With honour / worshyp / and great renowne  
Whiche prynce to kynge Penda / was the seconde sone  
This prynce was preserued / afore tyme secretly  
Werburge b. iii.



And saued by his subiectes / frome dethe and malady.

This valyaunt prynce / and redoubted knyght  
Kynge Aulfer thus crowned / with great prosperyte  
Upon the Mercyens regned / by tytle and myght  
Whiche realme was dryyded / whylom in partes thre  
Fyrt in the West marches / & in the South parte truely  
The thyrde parte was nomynate / mydle Englonde  
Duer them all thre / he reygned as is fonde.

This sayd kynge Aulfer / in honour famous  
Was deuoutely baptysed / with great solempnyte  
By two holy bysshops / the blessed Finanys  
And bysshop Jerumannus / saythe the hystoꝛye  
The kynge made a bowe / of hys auctoꝛyte  
All temples of ydols / within his regyon  
To destroy and chaunge / vnto chrysten relygion.

This Aulfer was polytyke / replete with wysdom  
Victoryous in batayle / proued by his chyualry  
His enemyes oppressed / by manhode and reason  
Subdued his aduersaryes / and had the victory  
From his realme expelled / all cruell tyranny  
Conquered in batayle / at Aldum ryght famous  
The kynge of West Saxons / called Kenwalcus.

Also he subdued / vnto his Emppre  
The Ilande Aecta / called the yle of wyght  
And after that he had / of it his desyre  
He gaue the sayd yle / by tytle full ryght  
To the kynge of cest Englonde / to enlarge his myght  
Under that condycyon / that he baptysed wolde be.

And was his godfather / of pure charyte

In lyke wyse as this prouynce / of Mercens  
Whylom was greatest realme / within Englande  
Many yeres contynuyng / in prehemynēs  
Ryght so the spryтуalte / well knowen and founde  
How fyue bysshop sees / within this sayd Merselande  
As at Chester / at Lychfelde / also at Worcester  
The fourth at Lyncolne / the fyfth at Dorchester.

Forthermore after dethe / of Jerumannus  
Bysshop of Lychfelde / Aulfer the sayd kynge  
Desyred the archebysshop / and prymate Theodorus  
To graunt them a bysshop / of holy luyng  
To gouerne the people / by spryтуall techyng  
To shewe to his subiectes / the ensample of vertu  
And to preche and teche / the sayth of Chryst Ihesu.

This holy archebysshop / and prymate Theodorus  
Desyred saynt Cedda / of the kynge Oswy  
For his perfeccyon / and luyng bertuous  
To be remoewed / to the prouyce of Mercy  
Kynge Aulfer was gladde / of his comyng truly  
Ryght so were all / the people of his realme  
Thankyng therfore / the kynge of Jerusalem.

Kynge Aulfer graunted / to saynt Cedda the cōfessoure  
Chan bysshop of Lychfelde / moche possessyon  
To edify chyrches / vnto chrystes honoure  
But namely he gaue a certayne mansyon  
In the prouynce of Lyndesey / ny vnto Lyncolne  
Suffycient to suffyse / and well for to content



fiftie seruauntes / of good relygious obedyent.

This noble sayd prynce / and redoubted souerayne  
Flouryng in manheed / wysedome and polycy  
Excelled the peres / of this realme certayne  
In person / fortitude / and proued chyualry  
Lyberall to his seruauntes / gentyll in company  
Gracyous to the poore / and a sure protectour  
A founder of chyrches / and a good benefactour.

**C**A lytell descripcyon of the noble maryage bytwene  
Kynge Aulfer & saynt Ermenylde y<sup>e</sup> kynges daughter  
of Kent / & of the solēpnite done at y<sup>e</sup> same season. Ca. vi.

**I**n meane whyle the kynge / mynded maryage  
By the sufferaunce of our lorde god omnyppotent  
Issue to encrease / acordynge to his lygnage  
After hym to succede / kynge and presydent  
He mynded moost / the kynges daughter of Kent  
Prynces Ermenylde / nomynate she was  
A beautefull creature / replete with great grace.

Certaynly her father / was called Ercomberte  
As afore is specyfied / the kynge of Kent  
Her mother Serburge / humble in her herte  
Of whome Ermenylde / a lady excellent  
Lynpally descended / by tytle full auncyent  
Her graundfather / Edbalde kynge Ethelbryctes sone  
The fyrst crysten prynce / of Saxons nacyon.

Of foure myghty kyngdomes / she is descended  
From the royall blode of Fraunce / also of Kent

Upon her fathers party / as afore is notyfyed  
And on her mothers syde / by lyne auntyent  
Frome the east Englande / famous and excellent  
Also of Northumberlande / flouryng in honour  
Conuerted and baptysed / vnto our sauyour.

This sayd Ermenylde / this floure of vertue  
Was euer dysposed / from her natyurte  
Unto the dyscyplne / of our lorde Ihesu  
Enspyrred with his grace / and benygnyte  
Refused this worlde / ryches and banyte  
He vbled the maners / of sadde dyspolycyon  
Passyng fragyll youth / and naturall reason.

Suche synguler confort / of vertuous doctryne  
In her so dyd water / a pure perfyte plante  
Whiche dayly encreased / by sufferaunce deupne  
Merueylously growyng / in her freshe and barnaunt  
With dyuers propyrtes / of grace exuberant  
As sobrynes / dyscrecyon / and mekenesse byrgynall  
Obedyence / graunte / and wysedome naturall.

Euery tree or plante / is proued euident  
Whyther good or euyl / by experyence full sure  
By the budde and fruyte / and pleasaunt descent  
A swete tree byngeth forth / by cours of nature  
Swete fruyte and delycious / in tast and verdure  
Ryght so Ercombert / by his quene moost mylde  
Brought graciously forth / the swete Ermenylde.

She folowed her father / in worshyp and honoure  
As her mother Serburge / she toke imytacyon  
Serburge

c.i.



To lyue in clenness / presentynge in behauyour  
Her father in power / her mother in relygion  
Humble in herte / haunyng compassion  
Pyteous and lyberall / where was necessyte  
Joyfull to obserue / the dedes of charyte.

Forthere of her lyfe / to make declaracyon  
As the true legende playnly dothe expresse  
Consyder the hystory / with good inspeccyon  
Of blessed Serburge / that noble pryncesse  
The sayd conuersacyon / and ghostly swetenesse  
That is perceyued / in her holy mother  
The same perfeccyon / was in the other.

Neuerthelesse Ermenylde / escape ne myght  
Woꝛldely honours / and seculer dygnyte  
As requyred so noble a state of ryght  
Ryches / possessyon / namely her beaute  
But vnto maryage / compelled was she  
Of her parentes / contrary to her entent  
To whome she was founde / euer obedyent.

This noble lady / by deuyne prouydens  
Elected to her / a spouse commendable  
A valyaunt prynce / the kynges sone of Mercyens  
Called kyng Aulfer / famous and honorable  
Reygnyng in Mercelande / with ioy incomparable  
Excellynge many other / prynces of this regyon  
In ryches / retynu / fortune / honour / and wysdome

At this maryage / was moche solemnyte  
Her father Ercomberte / and her frendes all

Tho pynces her vnclcs / Egbyct and Lothary  
The kyng of eest Englande / Aldulph in specyall  
Dukes / erles / barons / and knyghtes in generall  
Whiche sayd company / were redy that same day  
To worshyp the matrymony / in theyr beest aray.

This royall maryage / was solempnyfied  
With synguler pleasures / ryches and royalte  
Theyr frendes cosyns / redy on euery syde  
To do theyr deuoyre / and shewe humanyte  
Nothyng wantynge / euery thyng was plente  
Of delycate metes / and myghty wyne stronge  
With mynstrels / melody / and myrthes amonge.

Whan this fayre pynce / resplendent in vertue  
Came vnto Mercelande / in the order of matrymony  
Than grace with good gouernaunce / dyd byrre subdue  
Vertue was maystres / chiefe ruler and lady  
The faythe of holy chyrche / dyd growe and multiply  
Relygion encreased / honour and prosperyte  
In euery place pacyence / true loue and charyte.

At the solempne spousage / of this lady bryght  
Kyng Aulfer promysed / on his fydelyte  
Errours to correcke / by his wysdome and myght  
Clere to expell / all sectes of ydolatre  
Frome his realme / and fulfill by his auctoryte  
The promysse truely made / at the fonte of baptyme  
The chyrche to conserue / and saue it from ruyne.

The myghty realme of Mercens / also of Kent  
That season were brought / bothe vnto bryte  
Merburge c.ii.



And as one kyngedome / ruled full excellent  
They subiectes and seruauntes / in tranquyllite  
Kyng Aulfer by his quene / had a noble progenye  
Aulfade and Ruffyn / with prynce Kenrede  
And Werburge / of whome we purpose to procede.

¶ A breue declaracyon of the holy lyfe and conuersacyon  
of saynt Werburge / vsed in her tender youthe / aboue  
the comyn cours of nature. Ca. bii.

**T**his blessed lady / and royall prynces  
Descendynge of noble / and hye parentage  
Was doughter to Aulfer / the legende dothe rehers  
Kyng of Mercelande / and of famous lynage  
Her mother Ermenylde / ioynded to hym in maryage  
They dwelled somtyme / a lytell frome Stone  
At a place in Stafforde shyre / amyddes his regyon.

They had bytwene them / other chyldren thre  
Aulfade and Ruffyn / martyrs full glorvous  
Synt Kenrede his prynce / of greate auctoryte  
Cumplate at Rome / a confessor gracyous  
The lyues of these thre / we wyll not now dyscus  
But speke of the ghostly / and meke conuersacyon  
Of blessed Werburge / now at this season.

For as declareth / the true Passyonary  
A boke wherin / her holy lyfe wyten is  
Whiche boke remayneth / in Chester monastery  
I purpose by helpe / of Ihesu kyng of blys  
In any wyse to reherse / any sentence amys



But folowe the legende / and true hystory  
After an humble stile / and from it lytell bary.

This blessed Werburge / from her natyvyte  
folowyng the counseyll / of her noble parentes  
Dysposed her selfe / euer to humylyte  
Obedyent to them / with all reuerens  
Loth to dysplease / or make any offens  
Or dysquyet any reasonable creature  
Thus was her maner / in youthe be ye sure.

Sadde and demure / of her countenaunce  
Stable in gesture / proued in euery place  
Sobre of her wordes / all vertu to auaunce  
Humble / meke / and mylde / replete with grace  
Many vertuons maners / in her founde there was  
And dyuers gyftes naturall / to her appropriate  
As was conuenient / for so noble a state.

And as she encreased / moore and more in age  
A newe plant of goodnes / in her dayly dyd spryng  
Great grace and vertue / were set in her ymage  
Wherof her father / had moche merbeylyng  
Her mother mused / of this ghostly thyng  
To behold so yonge / and tender a may  
From vertu to vertu / to procede euery day.

No merueyll it is / who so taketh hede  
In naturall thynges / the dyuers operacyon  
Dothe not a royall rose / from a briere procede  
Passyng the stocke / with pleasaunt dylectacyon  
The swete ryuer passeth / by due probacyon

Werburge

c.iii.

His heed and fountayne / ryght so dothe she  
Transcende her parentes / with great benygnte.

And tho her bretherne / delpted for to here  
For theyr soule helthe / ghostly exortacyon  
yet she them passed / manyfolde more clere  
In loue of our lorde / and meke conuersacyon  
And lyke as Phebus / in his heuenly regyon  
Passed other stretes / shynynge moost pure  
So dothe this byrgyn / aboute the cours of nature.

Lordes / dukes / barons / within the kynges hall  
Merueyled on her maners / and constaunte sobrynes  
The plente of wysedome / and dyscrecyon withall  
In so tender age / they neuer knewe expresse  
Her mynde so perfyte / auoydynge all ylnes  
But they knewe well / it pretended by all reasone  
Synguler grace and goodnes / to her comynge soone.

Affyrmynge on this wyse / yf she wolde contynu  
With suche vertuous maner / in yeres of hye dyscrecyon  
That she sholde do honour / by the grace of Ihesu  
Unto all her kynrede / and synguler consolacyon  
An ensample of vertu / and humylyacyon  
Theyr conforste / theyr tresure / and sterre full bryght  
And chefe lumynary / shynynge day and nyght.

Fyrst in the mornynge / to chyrche she wolde go  
Folowynge her mother / the quene euery day  
With her boke and bedes / and departe not them fro  
Here all deuyne seruyce / and her deuocyons say  
And to our blessed sauour / mekely on knees pray



Dayly hym despyrnyng / for his endeles grace and pyte  
To kepe her frome synne / and preserue her in chastyte.

Where youthe is dysposed / of naturall mocyon  
To dysportes and pleasures / full of banyte  
This mayde was euer / of sadde dysposycyon  
Constaunt and dyscrete / styll and womanle  
Gladde in her soule / to here speke of chastyte  
Clenues and sobrenes / and ioyfull for to here  
Ghostly exortacyons / to her herte moost dere.

**C** How this yonge byrgyn saynt Werburge was despy-  
red of dukes & erles in maryage / and of the answere she  
gaue to the / in auoydynge worldly pleasures. Ca.viii.

**A** S tender youthe passed / this blessed maydyn  
Dayly encreased / more and more in vertue  
In ghostly science / and bertuous dyscyplyne  
Oblerynge the doctryne / of our lorde Ihesu  
Had his commaundementes / in her herte full tru  
So that no creature / more perfyte myght be  
In bertuous gyftes (by grace) than she.

She was replete / with gyftes naturall  
Her bysage moost pleasaunt / fayre and ampyable  
Her goodly eyes / clerer than the crystall  
Her countenaunce comly / swete and commendable  
Her herte lyberall / her gesture fauourable  
She lytell consyderynge / these gyftes transytory  
Set her felycyte / in chryst perpetually

She hadde moche worshyp / welthe / and ryches  
Werburge c.iiii.

Vestures / honoures / reuerence and royalte  
The ryches she dysposed / with great mekenesse  
To the poore people / with great charyte  
But her sadnes / constaunce / and humylyte  
Vertue / gentylnes / so pacyent and colde  
Transcended all these other / a thousande folde.

The vertuous maners / and excellent fame  
Of this holy byrgyn / redoubted so ferre  
In all this regyon / in praytynge her name  
That the nobles of this lande / wolde not dyfferre  
But with ryche apparell / and myghty power  
Came for to seke her / lyke as to Salomon  
Quene Saba approached / to here of his wysedome.

So lyke wyse some came / to her of her vertue  
Some of her sadnesse / and prudent dyscrecyon  
Some for her constaunce / so stable and true  
Some of her chastyte / and prenaunt reason  
Some for her Beaute / and famous wysdome  
And some that were borne / of kynges lygnage  
Desyred yf they myght / haue her in maryage.

In Beaute ampyable / she was equall to Rachell  
Comparable to Sara / in fyrmfelyte  
In sadnes and wysdom / lyke to Abygaell  
Replete as Delbora / with grace of prophecy  
Equyualent to Ruth / she was in humylyte  
In pulchrytude Rebecca / lyke Hester in Iolynesse  
Lyke Iudyth in vertue / and proued holynesse.

The prynce of Westsaxons / a pere of this lande



Wyllynge to haue her by way of maryage  
With humble reuerence / as we vnderstande  
Sayd to her these wordes / wysely and sage  
O souerayne lady / borne of hye lynage  
O beautefull creature / and impervall prynces  
This is my full mynde / that I now rehers.

From my fathers realme / hyder I am come  
Unto our presence / yf ye be so content  
With worshyp and honour / and moche renowne  
In all honest maner / aperyng euydent  
My mynde is on you set / with loue feruent  
To haue you in maryage / all other to forsake  
If it be your pleasure / thus me for to take.

ye shalbe asured / a quene for to be  
ye shall haue ryches / worshyp / and honour  
Royall ryche appareyll / and eke the sufferaynte  
Precyous stones in golde / worthy a kynges tresour  
Landes / rentes / and lybertees / all at your pleasur  
Seruauntes euery houre / your byddynge for to do  
With ladyes in your chambre / to wayte on you also.

With these kynde wordes / the byrgyn abasthed fore  
And with mylde countenaunce / answered hym agayne  
The playnes of her mynde / to rest for euermore  
Sayenge : o noble prynce / I thanke you now certayne  
For youre gentyll offer / shewed to me so playne  
ye be well worthy / for your regalyte  
To haue a better maryage / an hundreth folde than me.

But now I shewe you / playnly my true mynde



My purpose was neuer / marved for to be  
A lorde I haue chosen / redemer of mankynde  
Ihesu the seconde persone in trynyte  
To be my spouse / to Whome my byrgynnte  
I haue depely bowed / endurynge all my lyfe  
His seruaunt to be / true spouses and wyfe.

Therefore noble prynce / hertfully I you pray  
Tempte me no forther / after suche condycyon  
Whiche am so stedfast / and wyll be nyght and day  
Neuer for to chaunge / nor make alteracyon  
Take ye this answere / for a sure conclusyon  
The promyse I haue made / and bowe of chastyte  
Endurynge my lyfe / shall neuer broken be.

Dyuers other astaters / came her for to assaile  
Made instaunt requestes / vnto this byrgyn fre  
For all theyr busynesse / they myght not preuaile  
So constaunt fyrm & stable / in herte & mynde was she  
A mountayne or hyll / soner leue ye me  
Myght be remoewed / agaynst the course of nature  
Than she for to graunte / to suche worldly pleasure.

She well consydered / the texte of holy scripture  
Who byleueth her chaste / for the loue of Ihesu  
The temple of god / they be clypped sure  
And shalbe rewarded / for that noble vertu  
An hundreth folde (by grace) byces to subdu  
And heuen for to haue / at theyr departynge  
Whiche she remembred wysely / aboue all thyng.

**C** How y<sup>e</sup> false Werhode desyred kynge Aulfer to haue

Merburge his doughter in maryage. And how y<sup>e</sup> kynge  
graunted therto. Ca. ix.

**A**s afore is sayd / whan Penda the kynge  
By saynt Oswy kynge / at Leedes was slayne  
And Aulfer his sone / the fourth yere folowynge  
Was baptysed and crowned / By bysshop Synane  
A solempne boue he made / faythfull and certayne  
All temples of ydolles / in his realme to destroy  
And chaunge them to chyrches / and newe edify.

The same he promysed / as he was true knyght  
Whan that he maryed / blessed Ermenylde  
Dredynge sore the iustyce / of god almyght  
For his fathers demerytes / vnreconsyld  
On hym to fall sodeynly / and so be begyled  
Promysynge amendes / at his conuersyon  
Unto holy chyrche / with humble deuocyon.

Whiche kynge Aulfer / as was the more pyte  
By the wycked counseyll / of a fals knyght  
Called Merbode / ranne soone in apostasy  
For a lytell whyle / wantynge perfyte lyght  
The bryghtnes of the day / was tourned to nyght  
Whan he gaue credence / that creature vnto  
Prolongynge the actes / he promysed to do.

Under kynge Aulfer / chefe stewart of his hall  
Was this false Merbode / ruler of euery porte  
Whome the lady Venus / brought vnto thrall  
Perfed and wounded / so greuously his harte  
Enflammed with loue / and with her fyry darte



Plonget with sorowe / syghynge day and nyght  
The beaute of Werburge / moeued so his syght.

The blynde goddes Cupyde / bered so sore his mynde  
With interyor loue / and sensuall desyre  
Of worldely affeccyon / that reste coude he none fynde  
His spyryte was troubled / he brenned as dothe the fyre  
Upon this holy byrgyn / his loue was so entyre  
To haue her in maryage / was all his intent  
That euery houre was a moneth / after his iudgement.

Prouyded in his mynde / how that he well myght  
Enforce hym wysely / with boldynesse and polycye  
To shewe his full entent / in maner good and ryght  
No dyspleasure taken / bpon his lordes partye  
By this ymagynacyon / he fell bpon his knee  
Afore his lorde and kynge / desyrynge a petycyon  
His mynde to declare / with fully grace of pardon.

Excellent prynce he sayd / and moost worthy kynge  
That reygnes now within the realme of Englande  
Flourynge in chyualry / in honour encreasynge  
Trāscendynge other prynces / of this forsayd lande  
My full intencion / now ye shall vnderstande  
Requyrynge your grace / in this poore cyrcumstaunce  
At my petycyon / to take no greuaunce.

My synguler good lorde / hertfully I you pray  
With instaunte request / and humble supplicacyon  
Graunte me your doughter Werburge / as ye maye  
To haue her in maryage / auoydynge all treason  
If your grace deny / this present petycyon

Dethe me behoues / full soone and hastely  
My loue is so feruent / there is no remedy.

Stande by Werbode / kynge Gulfer than sayd  
Our chyfe champpon / in all our chyualry  
your humble desyre / shall not be denyd  
Of Werburge our doughter / now consent wyll we  
If ye may optayne / her wyll and mynde truele  
Her mothers also / vnder that condycyon  
We graunt her to you / at your meke suggestyon.

Of this gracyous answere / a gladd man he was  
Reioysynge in his herte / began to conspyre  
Castynge in his mynde / craftely by compas  
How he myght optayne / to the hye empyre  
And reygne after Gulfer / at his owne desyre  
But tho man prepose / god dysposed all  
Who clymbeth to hye / often hath a fall.

¶ How the quene saynt Ermenylde wolde not cōsente  
therto / & how her betherne saynt Wulfade and Ruffyn  
were agaynst the sayd maryage. Ca. x.

**O**f this busynesse / whan the quene had knowlege  
Namely of Werbode / the greuous presumpcyon  
How he had moeued / throught his wyched rage  
The kynge in suche causes / by synguler petycyon  
And how the kynge consented / to his supplicacyon  
She was sore greued / at this proude crafty knyght  
Called hym in presence / and sayd these wordes ryght.

Thou wyched tyraunt / and unkynde creature



folowyng thyne appetyte / and sensualyte  
Thou cruell pagane / presumyng at thy pleasure  
Blynded with ygnoraunce / and infydelyte  
Who gaue the lycence / and suche auctoryte  
Our doughter Werburge / to desyre of the kynge  
Without our counseyll / therto consentynge.

Consyder ryght well / thy kynred and pedegre  
It is well knowen / thou arte comen of nought  
Nothor of duke / erle / lorde / by auncetre  
But of bylayne people / yf it be well sought  
Agaynst our honour / now that thou haste wrought  
Whiche consequently / shall be to thy payne  
For all thy labour / is spende in bayne.

Thou knowes of a certayne / refused she haste  
Many a ryche maryage / within this londe  
A thousande tymes better / than euer thou wase  
Is now ozels shalbe / by any maner fonde  
Our doughter to the / shall neuer be bonde  
Nor suche a caytife / shall haue no powere  
With kynges blode royall / to approche it nere.

Under my souerayne lorde / and me also  
An offycer thou arte / and of great royalte  
To be a true seruaunte / now thou arte our foo  
Tried / proued / founde fals / in eche degre  
Thou haste well deserued / to be hanged on a tre  
For thy mysdede / thou shall soone repent  
Thy hye presumpcyon / proude and dysobedyent.

As for our doughter / and dere derlyng



By the grace of god / and our aduysment  
Soone shalbe marped / to the moost myghty kyng  
That euer was borne / and in this erth lent  
We meane our saupour / lorde omnyppotent  
Wherefore thy wretchydnes / wyll bpon the lyght  
Thou taynted traytour / out of our syght.

With that saynt Werburge / came into presence  
Afore her mother / and all the company  
Doyng her duty / with all due reuerenc  
Following her doctryne / full sapiently  
With lycence optayned / spake euydently  
After suche maner / that all the audyence  
Reioysed to here / her lusty eloquence

O souerayne lady / and kynges doughter dere  
My dere mother / ouer all thyng transytory  
O gracious prynces / and quene to kynge Gulsere  
To your ghostly counseyll / do me euer apply  
As I haue promysed / ryght euydently  
To the kyng of kynges / and lorde celestyall  
I wyll obserue / enduryng this lyfe mortall.

And thou false Werbode / following sensualyte  
I meruayle greatly / thy hye presumpcyon  
To moeue our father / with suche audacyte  
Knowyng my mynde / set on relygyon  
yet for thy soule helthe / accepte this lesson  
Aske mercy and grace / of my spouse eternall  
Lest vengeance sodeynly / bpon the do fall.

Wherewith her bretherne / Gulsade and Ruffyn

Two noble pynces / manfull sadde and wyle  
Sore bered with peyne / they hertes were within  
At this false stewart / whiche can so deuyle  
Agayne they honour / to do suche preiudyle  
As to attempte they father the kynge  
In so great a mater / they not consentynge.

They called Werbode / afore them all  
Sayenge thou cartyfe / who gaue the lycence  
To moeue this cause / so hy and specyall  
Touchynge a lady / of suche prehemynence  
A kynges doughter / of moche magnyfyence  
None comparable to hym / in all this regyon  
In honour / royalte / power / and dyscrecyon.

And as our mother sayd / to the bysorne  
Loke well thy progeny / and all thy lynage  
A byllayne orels wers / sothly / thou was borne  
Now our dere syster / wolde haue in maryage  
As semynge for a pynce / of hys parentage  
Than for suche a carle / by a prouerbe auncient  
A lad to wedde a lady / is an inconuenient.

Therefore we charge the / bpon greuous peyne  
Moue no suche mater / nor speke of it no more  
For yf suche mocyon / come to bys agayne  
Of hys presumpcyon / as is done afore  
Thou shalt repent / the cause and dede full sore  
Now we commaunde the / no forther to contriue  
But cease of suche busynesse / in peyne of thy lyue.

**¶** Now the false Werbode complayned bpon Aulfade



and fustlyn to kynge Aulfare by malyce and enuy / and  
was the cause of theyr dethe. Ca. xi.

**T**his wycked Werreode / the bedyll of Belpall  
The minister of myschef / & sergeant of sathanas  
Consyderynge he was / despyled of them all  
And sore rebuked / for his outragvous trespass  
He brenned in enuy / as a man without grace  
Cast in his mynde / how he myght wroken be  
Upon her bretherne / by some subtylte.

Euer from that tyme / he lay in wayte  
Seking occasyons / on them to complayne  
Dayly ymagyned / with subtyll deceyte  
Them to subdue / and cause to be slayne  
Attendynge oportunitie / to take them in a trayne  
By the false entysement / of his mayster Belpall  
Prompte to all myschefe / as dysciple naturall.

In fauour of his pryncce / by craft he hym brought  
(As now is in custome) with false flattery  
Some please theyr mayster / and that is ryght nought  
So dyd this Werreode / by subtyll polycy  
His vengeable mynde / was hymselfe to magnify  
And utterly to lose / these prynces twayne  
Or destroye hymselfe / by mysfortune playne.

Lyke as Archythofell / chefe counselour to absalon  
Sundry tymes moeued hym / vnto barysaunce  
And with kynge Assuerus / in fauour was Amon  
Counseylynge hym euer / vnto great myschaunce  
In lyke cause Werreode / moeued to vengeaunce  
Werburge. d. i.

Was chefe counseler / to Aulser the kyng  
Whiche brought hym selfe to shame / and euyl endyng.

The elder prynce Aulfade / in his dysporte  
Used haukyng / huntynge / for a past tyme  
But vnto huntynge namely / was his resorte  
Euery day in the morowe / longe afore pryne  
And as it fortunied / vpon a tyme  
A myghty harte reysed was / coursed a longe space  
Whome Aulfade pursued / with pleasure and solace.

This harte sore strayned / ranne for his socour  
As all deer done / of theyr propre  
To a well with water / after his great labour  
Hym to reconforte / and the more fresher be  
Wherby saynt Cead / had his oratorye  
The wylde harte there lay / full secrete and styll  
And suffered this holy man / to do all his wyl.

This blessed bysshop moeued with pyte  
Couered this sayd harte / with bowes and leues also  
Put a small corde / aboute his necke trule  
And after commaunded hym spedly to go  
To the wylde woodes / whens he came fro  
His pasture to seke / for saynt Cead knewe truly  
It was a sygne solowyng / of some great mysery.

(As Bede wytnesseth) this holy confessor  
Was bysshop of Lychefelde / and Couentre  
Whiche for the loue of our sauour  
In wyldernesse dwelled / all solytarye  
Contented with fruytes / of the wylde tree



With rootes / herbes / water / for his sustentacyon  
Enduryng penaunce / with due contemplacyon.

This venerable pryncce / ensuyng this great harte  
Approched to his cell / with great dyligence  
Tenderly requyryng / where and in what parte  
This harte escaped / so ferre out of presence  
This holy man answered / with all reuerence  
Beestes / byrdes / fowles / I kepe none at all  
But I knowe the instructour / of thy helthe eternall.

By this brute beest / thou shall perceyue well  
The sacramentes of holy chyrche euerychone  
To encrease thy byleue / by our ghostly counsell  
And so to be baptysed / and haue remysyon  
By dyuers brute beestes / for mannes saluacyon  
Our lord hath shewed / secretes mystycall  
To his electe persones / by grace supernall.

To Noe came conforste / after the great deluge  
By a doue / bringyng a braunche of Olyue  
To the prophet Hely / a rauens dyd refuge  
Brought hym his sustenaunce / and saued his lyue  
Unto saynt Eustach / full memoratyue  
Our lord appered / in a hartes lykenes  
To whome he obeyed / gladly with mekenes.

Of whiche examples / pryncce Aulfade gladde was  
Thankyng god and saynt Ceas / that he thyder come  
And sayd holy father / fulfylled with grace  
If ye can supply / my instaunte petycyon  
That the sayd harte / myght retourne hyder soone  
Werburge. d.ii.

Whiche is now in wyldernesse / vnto our presence  
Than to your doctryne / I wyll gyue fully credence.

Saynt Cead vnto prayer / deuoutely went  
And the wylde harte / frome the wood came hastely  
With the corde in his necke / apperynge euydent  
And in theyr presence / stode full ryght soberly  
My sone than he sayd / byleue than stedfastly  
Understande ye may / all thyng possible is  
To a faythfull persone / that perfyteley byleuys.

Aulfade confortd / and in the fayth probate  
Fell downe to his sete / with humble deuocyon  
Desyrynge baptysm / to be regenerate  
Unto our sauyour / for his soules saluacyon  
Saynt Cead blessed / the well that season  
And baptyfed this prynce / in name of the tynyte  
Was preest and godfather / for want of companye.

This chrysten prynce / tarped with hym all nyght  
In fastyng / prayer / and medytacyon  
And was refresshed / naturally in syght  
With bodyly and ghostly sustentacyon  
The next day receyued / the holy comunyon  
With lycence departed / to his father agayne  
The harte to the forest / recoursed certayne.

The thyrde day after / his brother Ruffyn  
Followyng the same harte / by deuyne prouydence  
Was well instructed / in ghostly doctryne  
Baptyfed by saynt Cead / & communed with reuerence  
And as it fortun'd / by playne experyence



Of all the proces done / to the elder brother  
All thyng dyd happe / ryght so to the other.

Afore this season / chrystes sayth moost gracypous  
Thurgh this lande / was preched in euery place  
By bysshop fynane / and Jerumannus  
Whiche Jeruman of east Englande / fyrst bysshop was  
And with saynt Ermenylde / came hyder by grace  
yet fully conuerted / was not Mersee regyon  
Clene frome ydolatry / vnto this season.

These forsayd prynces / conuerted newly  
By blessed Cead / to chrysten relygyon  
Dayly to hym resorted / for counseyll ghostly  
To encrease in bertue / and holy perfeccyon  
With lycence pretended / they wolde togyder come  
Unto his oratory / from the kynges hall  
Under colour of Huntynge / as they dyd it call.

And as it is wryten / in holy scrypture  
Whoso is a sure frende / loueth stedfastly  
And who is enemy / putteth dyligent cure  
At yschese to accomplyshe / moost studyously  
The false Werewode suspectynge / euidently  
The newe conuersyon / of these prynces twayne  
Prepared hym craftely / to take them in a trayne.

He watched on them / secretely euery day  
To knowe theyr resorte / and vnto what place  
Lyke as a hounde folowynge / these prynces to bytray  
Or a dogge dothe a dere / by sent of the chas  
Whan he had perceyued / how all thyng was.



He compassed in mynde / by false inuencion  
To complayne to the kynge / for theyr destruccion.

My synguler goode lorde / and moost pryncypall  
Sayd this Wherebode / the fals traytour  
Pleaseth your goodnes / and grace specyall  
To my supplicacyon / to be a protectour  
Ye haue two prynces / myghty in honour  
Whiche are my lordes / and euer shalbe  
If they wolde be true / to your soueraynte

They haue refused / the more pyte is  
your auneynt lawes / and sectes euerychone  
And with your lycence / haue done yet more amys  
For now they be subiecte / to a newe relygion  
Utterly refusynge / your decrees and olde custome  
Folowynge the counseyll / and mynde of a sennyor  
Called bysshop Cead / theyr specyall auctor.

your strayte commaundementes / they dayly despyce  
And purpose I tell you / in secretenes  
Unto your persone / to do moche preiudyce  
To murther or poyson you / shortly doubtles  
And so for to reygne / and gouerne your ryches  
Bytwene them twayne / to dvyde your lande  
By fals conspyracy / as ye shal vnderstande.

With these false tales / and many other mo  
The kynge was moeued / to malyce and yre  
By his compleccyon / as he was wont to do  
More cruell than a best / as feruent as the fyre  
Depely affyrmyng / that dethe shulde be theyr hyre

If he myght take them / in any place  
They shulde be slayne / and suffer withouten grace.

In the morowe after / whan Phebus began to clere  
The kynge toke Merbode / with hym secretly  
To try out the truthe / and how it wolde appere  
Wheder his prynces / were gone to the oratory  
If it were so / he sende hym pryuely  
To gyue them knowlege / of his entent  
For to remoeue / from his hasty Iudgment.

The father had pyte / vpon his chyldren naturall  
Wolde not haue slayne them / the sothe to say  
Wherfore he sende / the seruauant of Belvall  
To conuay them fro thens / some other way  
The kynge knewe hymselfe / not able that day  
To refrayne his yre / and cruell hastynesse  
Gyuen to hym of nature / in suche great dystresse.

This wycked Merbode / came to the oratory  
And sawe these prynces / in great deuocyon  
Counceyled his message / by malyce and enuy  
Retourned to the kynge / hastily and soone  
Newly complaynyng / by fals ymagynacyon  
A hundreth folde worse / than at the fyrst tyme  
With new addycyons / to byngne them to ruyne.

And whan the kynge / approached nygh the cell  
Herynge the complayntes / of this fals knyght  
The chyldren perceyued / a voyce ryght well  
Celled of theyr prayers / and came forth full ryght  
On whome whan Aulfere / had ones a syght



He was sore moeued / as hote as the fyre  
Agaynst her chyldren / that loued hym entyre.

But by the malyce / and wycked temptacyon  
Of the deuyll / mannes olde mortall enemy  
And what by the false crafty suggestyon  
Of Wycked Werebode / fulfylled with enuy  
And by his owne hastynesse / and cruell fury  
These prynces were slayne / Aulfade and Ruffyn  
Now glorious martyrs / reygnyng in heuyn.

After whan kynge Aulfer / approached his castell  
And binneth was entred / into his hall  
Incontynently a spyryte / the false fende of hell  
Entred fals Werebode / after the people all  
Inwardly hym bered / with peynes continuall  
That his armes and handes / he dyd horribly tere  
Whiche todayne bengeaunce / all the courte dyd fere.

He rored and yelled / lyke a wylde bull  
Shewed all the myschefe / malyce and enuy  
Done agaynst the martyrs / with a mynde yrefull  
So sore constrayned / with peynes greuoufly  
The deuyll ceased not / his dolours to multiply  
Tyll his fylthy soule / compelled sore was  
For to expyre / for his hydeous trespas.

¶ How kynge Aulfer was conuerted & toke great re-  
pentaunce for his offences. And by the counseyll of saynt  
Ceade was a deuoute man / and a good benefactour to  
holy chyrche / and a founder of dyuers holy places rely-  
gyous.

Ca. xii.



**T**han Gulfer consyderynge / with due dyscrecyon  
His cruell hastynes / and furvous mynde  
How ferre he had / abused his reason  
Agaynst his chyldren / by nature and kynde  
He sore repented / in hystory as we fynde  
His greuous trespass / and homycyde binnaturall  
In conscyence greued / for his synnes mortall.

Namely lamentynge / in soule his apostasy  
After his baptyme / and ghostly conuersyon  
And for the departure / of his prynces truly  
Contrary to ryght / kynde and all reason  
The losse of his fame / thugh this regyon  
A dethe to his quene / and his louers all  
Greuous to his kynnesmen / and frendes naturall.

All these consydered / with due cyrcumstaunce  
He wayled and weped / sobbynge full sore  
Plonged in sorowe / heuynes / and greuaunce  
Lamentynge his offence / a thousande tymes therfore  
His intollerable peyne / encreased more and more  
Clofully he went / to his bed by and by  
Supposynge some dethe / withouten any remedy.

Some of his louers / beyng there present  
Gaue hym theyr counseyll / to hunte in the forest  
Some to dysportes / and pleasures euydent  
Some vnto melody / all thoughtes to degest  
But Ermenylde his quene / whiche loued hym best  
Counseyled hym truly / to take contrycyon  
And mendes make / by due satysfaccyon.

Of this ghostly counseyll / the kynge was very glad  
And in the morowe after / prepared besyly  
With mekenesse to seke / blessed saynt Cead  
So whan the kynge came / to his oratory  
The bysshop was at masse / and ryght consequently  
fro heuen descended / so glozyous a lyght  
That of the mystery / Aulfer had no syght.

Whan masse was ended / saynt Cead his bestures caste  
Upon the sonne beame / by myracle there hangynge  
Supposynge on a fornie / and made moche haste  
To mete at the doore / mekely the sayd kynge  
Whiche laye there prostrate / penaunce desyrynge  
With reuerence hym eleuate / and gaue an exortacyon  
The kynge was agreable / for to do satysfaccyon.

The bysshop hym enioyned / in parte of penaunce  
To destroye all ydolles / and sectes of ydolatry  
In all his realme / and the temples of paganes  
To translate to the honour / of god almyghty  
With preestes and clerkes / to pray and synge deuoutly  
Also peas and iustyce / to be kepte continuall  
With the werkes of mercy / to be vsed in specyall.

Forther he enioyned hym / of his charyte  
Monasteryes to make / of great perfeccyon  
Endowed with landes / possessed in lyberte  
Therin for to set / men of relygyon  
To pray to our lord / for his saluacyon  
Whiche Aulfer promysed / to fulfyll gladle  
As soone as he myght / by possybylyte.



Then the foresayd kynge / and the holy confessor  
Went to theyr prayers / in the oratory  
And as the kynge looked up / to our sauour  
The sayd sacrat vestures / he sawe euidently  
Hangynge on the sonne beame / full merueylously  
His gloues / his gyrdell / the kynge had vpon  
Whiche shortly to grounde / falled adowne.

Wherby he perceyued / the great holynesse  
Of blessed saynt Cead / and interyor deuocyon  
Desyred his prayer / dayly with mekenesse  
To almyghty god / for his remysyon  
Frome thens departed / with his benedycyon  
Joyfull in his soule / towarde his place  
Thankynge god mekely / of his great grace.

As the kynge promysed / to our sauour  
Shortly he auoyded / all ydolatry  
Brenned theyr ydolles / correcked theyr errour  
Translated theyr temples / vnto god almyghty  
Founded monasteryes / of relygyon many  
Of men and women / gaue them possessyons  
Landes / rentes / ryches / to encrease deuocyon

Namely he founded / a ryche monastery  
For dethe of the prynces / in satysfaccyon  
To the honour of god / and saynt Peter truly  
Called Peterborowe abbay / in all this regyon  
Endowed it with rentes / lybertes / possessyon  
A place where many / relygious persones be  
Seruyng day and nyght / our lorde with charyte.



Also there was founded / at Stone a priore  
In the honour of god / and the martyrs twayne  
Possessed with landes / rentes and lyberte  
Where deuoute chanons / ben inhabyte certayne  
Myracles and sygnes / haue ben shewed there playne  
To the laude and prayse / of god omnyppotent  
And of these holy martyrs / patrones there present.

**O**f the feruent desyre & great deuocyon y<sup>e</sup> saynt Wer-  
burge hadde to be relygious / & of y<sup>e</sup> dayly supplycacyōs  
she made to the kynge her father for the same. Ca. xiii.

**A**s this myghty prynces / encreased in age  
So dayly encreased / her good condycyons  
That greatly enioyed / her honorable lynage  
Consyderynge in her / suche vertuours dysposycyons  
In bygyls / prayers / and ghostly medytacyons  
Set all her mynde / power / myght / and mayne  
To serue our saupour / day and nyght certayne.

She well consydered / with due dyscrecyon  
Of this present lyfe / the great wretchydnesse  
How dredefull it is / full of varpacyon  
Deceuable / peryllous / and of no sykernesse  
The tyme vncertayne / to be knowen doubtlesse  
For here is no cytee / nor sure dwellynge place  
All thyng is transytory / in short proces and space.

Wherefore this byrgyn / gladde and benyuolent  
Folowynge the counseyll / of blessed Mathewe  
Was on of fyue byrgens / euer redy present  
Had her lampe replete / with oyle full of vertue

Kedy for to mete / her spouse swete Ihesu  
With charytable werkes / in her soule contynuall  
Therefore she was taken / to his blys eternall.

She well consydered / the wordes of the gospell  
Who refuses pleasures / and naturall generacyon  
For the loue of Ihesu / rewarded shalbe well  
With a hundreth folde grace / here for theyr guerdon  
And after this lyfe / haue eterne fruytyon  
Whiche she remembred / and euer fro that day  
On her father wolde call / and mekely to hym say.

Reuerent myghty prynce / and lorde hono:able  
Moost dere byloued father / my synguler helpe & socour  
My trust / trefure / and solace / to me moost ampyable  
Instauntly I beseeche you / for loue of our sauoure  
And of his mother mary / of byrgyns the floure  
With all the company / that in heuen be  
My humble petycyon / now graunt it vnto me.

Well byloued father / this is my fully mynde  
My instaunte desyre / and humble supplicacyon  
By the grace of god / maker of all mankynde  
And by your lyfence / helpe / and turycyon  
I purpose to enter / into holy relygyon  
And utterly refuse / all pleasures transytory  
To be professed / at the house of Ely.

O my dere doughter / sayd this noble kynge  
My pleasure / solace / and hope of my gladnesse  
Moost dere byloued / and my synguler swete derlynge  
I well consyder / your vertue and sadnesse

Merburge.

e.iii.



your instaunt request / and humble gentylnesse  
And of your desyre / inwardly I am gladde  
But yet your motyon / makes my herte full sadde.

All my ioye and conforste / now resteth in the  
Syth thy dere bretherne / from vs ben agone  
Thou arte the trusty treasure / to thy mother and me  
Our synguler solace / and sure consolacyon  
Wherfore swete derlynge / as for my heyre alone  
I wolde the mary / and a quene the make  
If thou wyll consent / and my counseyll take.

Consyder and beholde / through all this lande  
Take the a maryage / at thyne owne pleasure  
A prynce moost balyaunt / moost noble to be founde  
And of helpe and ayde / I shall the assure  
With ryches / royalte / welthe / and trefure  
Clothes of golde / and royall ryche apparell  
And all thynges necessary / as man can of tell.

Remembre also / how after course of kynde  
Aege dothe sore greue / thy moder and me also  
Therfore naturall loue (swete chylde) dothe me bynde  
To gyue the best counseyll / what thou shall do  
To honour and worshyp / how thou may come to  
Whiche great renowne / and hye estate certayne  
To se the a quene / wyll make vs yonge agayne.

God ordeyned matrymony / fyrst in Paradyse  
Bytwene man & woman / whan he the worlde dyd make  
That mankynde myght encrese / multiply and rylse  
Eche persone at pleasure / a spouse for them to take



Now ioyned by holy chyrche / all other to forsake  
The chylde of the father / to take his dyscyplne  
And after that to teche / his yssue theyr doctryne.

Also man and beest / haue dysposycyon naturall  
To brynge forth theyr lykenesse / by generacyon  
But man hauynge reason / and fre wyll with all  
As lawe requyeth / hath his procreacyon  
Under true matrymony / by his owne eleccyon  
Or els to obserue / and lyue in pure byrgynyte  
For the greater meryte / and rewarde of glorie.

And yf all maydens / shulde kepe theyr chastyte  
As ye now do / how shulde the worlde encrese  
Swete louely creature / ryght ioyfull wolde I be  
To kysse a chylde of thyne / hauynge thy lykenesse  
And se the also coronate / as a myghty pryncesse  
Enclyne dere derlynge / thy mynde to myne entent  
And all these sayd honours / wyll folowe consequent.

**C** Of the meke answer saynt Werburge gaue to her fa-  
ther whan she was moeued to maryage. Ca. xiiii.

**T**He holi mayd / whā she knewe her fathers mynde  
Her soule was replete / with woo & penyuenesse  
And sore began to wepe / after cours of kynde  
The salte teeres dystylled / for payne and heuynesse  
By her ruddy chekes thynnyng / full fayre doubtlesse  
Pyteous to beholde / but whan the foresayd mayde  
Ceased of her sorowe / thus to hym she sayde.

Most beest beloued father / nexte to god almyght  
Werburge. e. iiii.

your kynde gentyll mocyon / wolde moeue in wardely  
The mynde of any creature / to folowe you ryght  
Or any stony stomake / to relent and apply  
And resolute eche harde herte / to waylynge dolefully  
Consyderynge on euery parte / with good dyscrecyon  
To accepte or refuse / this harde eleccyon.

Father I haue ben to you / meke and obedyent  
Euer syth I had / yeres of dyscrecyon  
Gladde to obserue / your hye commaundment  
With loue interyor / and humble intencion  
And so wyll contynue / with lowly submyssyon  
In this present lyfe / whyle I do endure  
Of my loue and prayer / euer ye shalbe sure.

But moost louely father / I pray you hertfully  
Take no dyspleasure / pardon what I shall say  
My soule / my herte / and mynde / is set stydfastly  
To serue my lord god / nyght and also day  
Neuer to be maryed / by no maner of way  
For sothly I haue bowed / my true byrgynyte  
Unto Ihesu / the seconde persone in trynyte.

That is my spouse / and blessed sauyour  
For whose loue refused / in certaynte haue I  
All worldely pleasures / welth / ryches and honour  
With all boyde busynesse / and cures transytory  
My loue on hym is sette / so sure and feruently  
That nothyng shall separate / my hert hym fro  
Skenes nor helthe / pleasure / peyne / ne wo.

Also my full entent / was neuer otherwyse



Than to be handmayde / to my lord Ihesu  
And of my soule and body / to make hym sacryfice  
for my ghostly welthe / all byces to subdue  
He is my dere spouse / solace / helthe moost true  
On hym is all my herte / and hase ben set alway  
And euer shalbe / vnto my endynge day.

In this wretched worlde / we can not longe endure  
And of this present lyfe / we are in no suerte  
As we haue deserued / so we shalbe sure  
After this pylgrymage / rewarded for to be  
for mercy and grace / therfore mekely call we  
Whyle we haue tyme and space / for than it is to late  
Whan dethe with his darte / sayth to us chekemate.

Wherefore dere father / I shewe you now agayne  
All my hole herte / desyre and entent  
Whiche euer hath ben / and so shalbe certayne  
for to be relygious / chaste / and obedyent  
Namely at Cly / for theyr vertue excellent  
father I requyre you / for chrystes loue and charyte  
My meke supplicacyon / now graunte it vnto me.

The kynge well consydered / his doughters desyre  
Her constaunte true mynde / and pure deuocyon  
Graunted her petycyon / with synguler loue entyre  
Crustynge by her prayer / and dayly supplicacyon  
Unto heuen blysse / the rather for to come  
Her mother Ermenylde / was gladde of this tydynge  
And lauded full lowly / our lord and heuen kynge.

¶ Now saynt Werburge was made a moyne after her



desyre at the monastery of Ely vnder saynt Audry / lady  
and abbesse. Ca. xv.

**T**Han the kynge remēbred / with due cye cūstaunce  
The excellent vertue / sadnes / and grauyte  
Of his dere doughter / and the perfyte constaunce  
Her humble petrycon / and pure byrgynyte  
He thanked our lorde / with great humylyte  
Of his infynyte grace / that so royall a floure  
Frome hym descended / to his prayse and honoure.

He sende messages / in all goodly hast  
With letters myssyue / thurgh his regyon  
Commaundyng his subiectes / they shulde full fast  
By a day assygned / be redy euerychone  
In theyr best maner / with hym for to gone  
To bynge his doughter / to the hous of Ely  
There to be relygyous / after her desyderey.

When the day was come / of theyr appoyntment  
The nobles of the realme / and lordes were redy  
To attēde on theyr souerayne / at his commaūdyment  
Kynge Gulfer prepared / all thyng pleasauntly  
And of his court / had chosen a noble company  
In theyr best aray / royalte / and renowne  
To offer saynt Werburge / to god and relygyon.

The kynge on his Journey / rode forthe royally  
The quene hym folowed / as is the custome  
Werburge succeded them consequently  
The peeres and his counseyll / knewe well theyr rowme  
Dukes / erles / lordes / and many a worthy barowne

Knyghtes / squyers / gentyls / of her kynred also  
With ladyes and gentyl women / & seruañtes both two.

When the kynge approched / the sayd monastery  
Saynt Audy than abbesse / toke her holy couent  
And mette the sayd kynge / and all his company  
With solempne processyon / and gretynge benyuolent  
Praylynge our lorde god omnyotent  
Whiche of his goodnes / to that congregacyon  
Sende them a syster / of suche perfeccyon.

Whereburge requyred / by the order of charyte  
Meekely on her knees / to enter relyggyon  
Saynt Audy receyued / of her benygnyte  
And graunted fre lycence / after her petycyon  
Gladde were also / the hole congregacyon  
And sange (Te deum) with moche reuerence  
Magnifyenge our lorde / of his prouydence.

She was receyued / with moche solempnyte  
Into the holy order / after her entent  
To proue her sadnes / and humylyte  
(As is the custome) and so be obedyent  
To lyue euer after / humble / chaste / and contynent  
Than dyd they? Joye / merueylously encreas  
Consyderynge her pacyens / and perfyte holynes.

Her royall dyademe / and shynynge coronall  
Was fyrst refuted / for loue of our sauoure  
The poore bayle accepted / and the symple pall  
The royall ryche purpull / reiected that same houre  
With other clothes of golde / sylkes of great honoure



She toke lowe appareyll / bestures that were blake  
All her plesaunt garmentes / she clerely dyd forsake.

Also she refused / her fathers realme and royalte  
All ryches / rentes / pleasures / possession  
With all worldely honoures / full of banyte  
Lowly submyttyng her / vnder subieccyon  
Vertu to encrease / myndyng moost relygyon  
She refused yet more her owne proper wyll  
Put all to her abbesse / her order to fulfyll.

**C** Of the great solempnyte kynge Aulfer made at the  
ghostly maryage of saynt Merburge his doughter / to al  
his louers / colyns / and frendes. Ca. xvi.

**K**ynge Aulfer her father / at this ghostly spousage  
Prepared great tryumphes / and solempnyte  
Made a royall feest / as custome is of maryage  
Sende for his frendes / after good humanyte  
Kepte a noble houtholde / shewed great lyberalyte  
Bothe to ryche and poore / that to this feest wolde come  
No man was denyed / euery man was well come.

Her uncles and aunces / were present there all  
Ethelred / and Merwalde / and Mercelly also  
The blessed kynges / whome sayntes we do call  
Saint Keneswyd / saint Keneburg / theyr systers both two  
And of her noble lygnage / many other mo  
Were redy that season / with reuerence and honour  
At this noble tryumphe / to do all theyr deuour.

Tho kynges mette them / with theyr company



Egbrict kyng of kent / brother to the quene  
The seconde was Aldulphe kyng of the east party  
Brother to saynt Audry / wyfe and mayde serene  
With dyuers of theyr progeny / and nobles as I wene  
Dukes / erles / barons / and lordes ferre and nere  
In theyr best aray / were present all in fere.

It were full teduous / to make descripcyon  
Of the great tryumphes / and solempne royalte  
Belongynge to the feest / the honour and prouysyon  
By playne declaracyon / bpon euery partye  
But the sothe to say / withouten ambyguyte  
All herbes and floures / fragraunt sayre and swete  
Were strawed in halles / and layd vnder theyr fete.

Clothes of golde and arras / were hanged in the hall  
Depaynted with pyctures / and hystoryes manyfolde  
Well wrought and craftely / with precyous stones all  
Glyteryng as Phebus / and the beten golde  
Lyke an erthly paradyse / pleasaunt to beholde  
As for the sayd moynes / was not them amonge  
But prayenge in her cell / as done all nouyce yonge.

The story of Adam / there was goodly wrought  
And of his wyfe Eue / bytwene them the serpent  
How they were deceyued / and to theyr peynes brought  
There was Cayn and Abell / offerynge theyr present  
The sacryfyce of Abell / accepte full euident  
Tuball and Tubalcain / were purtrayed in that place  
The inuentours of musyke / and craftes by great grace.

Noe and his shyppe / was made there curiously

Sendyng forth a rauen / whiche neuer came agayne  
And how the dourue retourned / with a braunche hastely  
A token of conforste and peace / to man certayne  
Abraham there was / standyng upon the mount playne  
To offer in sacryfyce / Isaac his dere sone  
And how the shepe for hym / was offered in oblacyon.

The twelue sones of Jacob / there were in purtrapture  
And how into Egypt / yonge Joseph was solde  
There was inprysoned / by a false coniectour  
After in all Egypte / was ruler (as is tolde)  
There was in pycture / Moyses wyse and bolde  
Our lorde apperyng / in busshes flammynge as fyre  
And nothyng therof brent / lese / tree / nor spyre.

The ten plages of Egypte / were well embost  
The chyldren of Israell / passyng the reed see  
Kynge Pharoo drowned / with all his proude hoost  
And how the two tables / at the mounte of Synaye  
Were gyuen to Moyses / and how soone to ydolatry  
The people were prone / and punysshed were therfore  
How Datan and Abyron / for pryde were lost full poure.

Duke Josue was ioyned / after them in pycture  
Ledyng the Iſrehelytes / to the lande of promysyon  
And how the sayd lande / was dyuyded by mesure  
To the people of god / by equall sundry porcyon  
The Judges and bysshops / were there euerychone  
Theyr noble actes / and tryumphes Marcyall  
Freschly were browdied / in these clothes royall.

Nexte to hye borde lorde / appered fayre and bryght



Kyng Saul and Dauid / and prudent Salomon  
Roboas succedynge / whiche soone lost his myght  
The good kyng Elechys / and his generacyon  
And so to the Machabees / and dyuers other nacyon  
All these sayd storpes / so rycheely done and wrought  
Belögyng to kyng Aulfer / agayn y<sup>e</sup> tyme were brought

But ouer the hye desse / in the pryncypall place  
Where the sayd thre kynges / late crowned all  
The best hallynge hanged / as reason was  
Wherin were wrought / the .ix. ordres angelycall  
Dyuyded in the Jerarchyes / not cessynge to call  
Sanctus / sanctus / sanctus / blessed be the trynyte  
Dominus deus sabaoth / thre persones in one deyte.

Nexte in ordre surynge / sette in goodly purtrapture  
Was our blessed lady / floure of fempnyte  
With the twelue apostles / echeone in his fygure  
And the foure euangelystes / wrought moost curpously  
Also the dyscyples / of chryst in theyr degre  
Prechynge and techynge / vnto euery nacyon  
The saythtes of holy chyrche / for theyr saluacyon.

Martyrs than folowed / ryght manyfestly  
The holy innocentes / whome Herode had slayne  
Blessed saynt Stephan / the prothomartyr truly  
Saynt Laurence / saynt Vincet / sufferynge great payne  
With many other mo / than here ben now certayne  
Of whiche sayd martyrs / exsample we may take  
Pacyence to obserue / in herte for chrystes sake.

Confessours approached / ryght conuenient



freschely embrodred / in ryche tyllshewe and fyne  
Saynt Nicholas saynt Benedycte / and his couent  
Saynt Jerom / Basilyus / and saynt Augustyne  
Gregory the great doctour / Ambrose and saynt Martyne  
All these were sette / in goodly purtrayture  
Them to beholde / was a heuenly pleasure.

Argyngs them folowed / crowned with the lily  
Amonge whome our lady / chese presydent was  
Some crowned with rooses / for theyr great vyctory  
Saynt Katheryne / saynt Margarete / saynt Agathas  
Saynt Cecyly / saynt Agnes / and saynt Charytas  
Saynt Lucye / saynt Menefryde / and saynt Apolyn  
All these were brothered / the clothes of golde within.

Upon the other syde / of the hall sette were  
Noble aunycnt stoyres / & how the stronge Sampson  
Subdued his enemyes / by his myghty power  
Of Hector of Troy / slayne by fals treason  
Of noble Arthur / kynge of this regyon  
With many other mo / whiche it is to longe  
Playnly to expresse / this tyme you amonge.

The tables were couered / with clothes of Byaper  
Rychely enlarged / with syluer and with golde  
The cupborde with plate / shynynge fayre and clere  
Marshallles theyr offyces / fulfylled manyfolde  
Of myghty wyne plenty / bothe newe and olde  
All maner kynde / of meetes delycate  
(When grace was sayd) to them was preparate.

To this noble feest / there was suche ordynauce

That nothyng wanted / that gotten myght be  
On see and on lande / but there was habundaunce  
Of all maner pleasures / to be had for monye  
The bordes all charged / full of meet plente  
And dyuers subtyltes / prepared sothly were  
With cordyall spyces / theyr ghestes for to chere.

The Joyfull wordes / and swete communycacyon  
Spoken at the table / it were harde to tell  
The man at lyberte / without interrupcyon  
Bothe sadnes and myrthes / also pryue counsell  
Some adulacyon / some the truthe dyd tell  
But the great astatys / spake of theyr regyons  
Knyghtes of theyr chyualry / of craftes the comons.

Certayne at eche cours / of seruyce in the hall  
Trumpettes blewe vp / shalmes and claryons  
Shewynge theyr melody with / toynes musycall  
Dyuers other mynstrelles / in crafty proporcyons  
Made swete concordance / and lusty danysons  
An heuenly pleasure / suche armory to here  
Reioysynge the hertes / of the audyence full clere.

A synguler mynstrell / all other ferre passynge  
Toyned his instrument / in pleasaunte armory  
And sange moost swetely / the company gladyng  
Of myghty conquerours / the famous byctory  
Wherwith was rauysshed / theyr spyrytes and memory  
Specyally he sange / of the great Alexandere  
Of his tryumphes and honours / enduryng .xii. yere.

Solemply he songe / the state of the Romans  
At Warburge

f.i.



Ruled vnder kynges / by polycy and wysedome  
Of theyr hye iustyce / and ryghtfull ordynauns  
Dayly encreasyng / in worshyp and renowne  
Tyll Tarquyne y<sup>e</sup> proude kyng / with y<sup>e</sup> great cōfusyon  
Oppressed dame Lucrece / the wyfe of Colatyne  
Kynge neuer reygned in Rome / syth that tyme.

Also how the Romayns / vnder thre dyctatours  
Gouerned all regyons / of the worlde ryght wysely  
Tyll Iulys Cesar / excellynge all conquerours  
Subdued Pompeius / and toke the hole monarchy  
And the rule of Rome / to hymselfe manfully  
But Cassius Brutus / the fals conspyratour  
Caused to be slayne / the sayd noble emperour.

After the sayd Iulys / succeded his syster sone  
Called Octauianus / in the imperyll see  
And by his precepte / was made descripcyon  
To euery regyon / lande / shyre / and cytee  
A trybute to pay / vnto his dygnyte  
That tyme was / vnyuersall peas and honour  
In whiche tyme was borne / our blessed sauoure.

All these hystories / noble and auncient  
Reioysynge the audyence / he sange with pleasuer  
And many other mo / of the newe testament  
Pleasaunt and profytable / for theyr soules cure  
Whiche he omitted / now not put in bre  
The mynysters were redy / theyr offyce to fulfyll  
To take by the tables / at theyr lordes wyll.

¶ Then this noble feest / and great solempnyte.



Dayly endurynge / a longe tyme and space  
Was royally ended / with honour and royalte  
Eche kyng at other / lyfence taken hace  
And so departed from thens / to theyr place  
Kynge Gulfer retourned / with worshyp and renowne  
Frome the house of Ely / to his owne mansyon.

**C** Of the holy professyon & ghostly conuersacyon saynt  
Merburge vsed at Ely in relygion / vnder saynt Audy  
her abbesse and cosyn. Ca. xlii.

**S**o whan this byrgyn / the spouse of Ihesu  
Had fully contynued / in holy relygion  
With mekenesse / pacyens / and all vertu  
Fully the yere / of her probacyon  
Than she made instaunce / for her professyon  
Unto saynt Audy / her lady and abbesse  
Whiche soone was graunted / with great gladnesse.

Ordynaunce they made / and great royalte  
Her frendes were called / agaynst that season  
She was professed / with great humylte  
The obseruaunce done / with due deuocyon  
She made solempne bowe / of ghostly conuersacyon  
Meke to obserue / obedience and chastyte  
Endurynge her lyfe / and wylfull pouerte.

By the example / of her perfeccyon  
Many dyuers persones / of her noble lynage  
Refused this worlde / and entred relygion  
Renouynge bayne pleasures / ryches and maryage  
Enclpned to bertue / for theyr ghostly auauntage  
Merburge f. ii.

As may be specyfied / here after folowynge  
Theyr names / theyr astate / and theyr good lyuynge.

Now this glourious byrgyn / after her desyre  
Is ghostly maryed / to our lorde Ihesu  
Accordynge to her entent / and true loue entyre  
She dayly encreased / frome vertu to vertu  
With more strayter lyfe / byces to subdu  
The longer she endured / in relygion  
The better she prepared / her herte to deuocyon.

And tho this byrgyn / clerely dyd forsake  
All ryches honours / and pleasures worldly  
With all possessyons / for her lordes sake  
She thought than she reygned / moost lyke a lady  
Cause that she lyued / in chrystes seruyce dayly  
And certayne it is / holy scrypture recordynge  
Who serues well god / dothe reygne lyke a kyng.

In prayer / penaunce / and / contemplacyon  
Was all her busynesse / and study alway  
Compasynge by what maner of medytacyon  
She myght best please / our lorde to his pay  
Offerynge her persone / a true sacryfyce euery day  
No labour her greued / loue was so feruent  
Her body vpon erthe / her soule in heuen lent.

Swete / comly creatures / ladyes euerychone  
Sekynge for pleasures / ryches and arayment  
Blynded by your beaute / and synguler affeccyon  
Consyder this byrgyn / humble and pacyent  
A spectacle of vertue / euer obedyent.



Beholde how she hase / clerely layde away  
Her royall ryche clothes / and is in meke aray.

your garmentes now be gay and glorvuous  
Euery yere made / after a newe inuencyon  
Of sylke and beluet / costely and precvuous  
Brothered full rychely / after the beest facyon  
Shynnyng lyke angels / in your opynyon  
Where lesse wolde suffyse / and content as well  
As all that great cost / folowynge wyse counsell.

A playne example / now ye may take  
Of this myghty kynges doughter dere  
Whiche for the loue of god / dyd forsake  
All suche bayne pleasures / and garmentes clere  
She gaue herselfe / to penaunce and prayere  
Wherefore saye ladyes / do waye suche vanyte  
Prepare yourselfe / to vertue and humylyte.

Some of lowe byrthe / excellynge theyr degre  
Done couet to haue / as royall ryche besture  
Worldly honours / also the sufferaynte  
As they were ladyes / by lyne of nature  
Of dredefull mysery / they bere the fygure  
Prowde as a Pecoche / whelynge full bryght  
All is but vanyte / contentynge the syght.

**O** Glorvuous byrgyn / replete with synguler grace  
Endowed with souerayne gyftes celestyall  
Refusynge boyde pleasures / whan thou had space  
And honours transytory / whiche hath brought in thral  
A thousande persones / in ruine to fall  
Werburge.



A myrrour thou arte / of byrgynall clemnes  
Of true obedyence / and perfyte mekenes.

So Werburge professed / to her rule full ryght  
A redolent floure / all vertue to augment  
As Lucyfer shynynge / a clere lampe of lyght  
For whome her spouse / god sone omnytpotent  
Shewed many myracles / to euery pacient  
A sygne her loue was / supernaturall  
Closed in our lorde / by grace supernall.

The excellent goodnes / of this moyne  
And fame of vertue / with humylyte  
Transcended all other / in perfyte holynes  
So that sundry persones / approached that party  
For ghostly conforste / counsell and remedy  
Suche as to her came / penyue / woo / and sadde  
Departed ioyfull / in soule mery and gladde.

She dayly prouyded / for ghostly treasure  
To buylde her a place / a sure mansyon  
Euer to remayne / with ioye and endure  
In pleasure perpetuall / without corrupcyon  
Whiche she optayned / by her deuocyon  
After this departure / to reygne as a presydent  
In eterne blys / with god omnytpotent

¶ A lytell treatyse of the lyfe of saynt Audy abbessle of  
Ely / and of her holy couersacyon and great deuocyon /  
vnder whome saynt Werburge was made nonne / and  
professed. Ca. xviij.

**T**he yere of our lord. bi. C. ix. and thyrty  
Regned saynt Anna / kynge of east Englande  
Whiche maryed saynt Herewith / of the North party  
They had noble yssue / as we vnderstande  
Prynce Aldulph and Jurwyne / in story as is founde  
Saynt Serburge the quene / and blessed Audry  
Saynt Ethelberge / Withburge / a holy progeny.

This blessed Audry / called Etheldred  
Of two great kyngedomes / lynyally descendynge  
Was borne in Suffolke / as sayth saynt Bede  
In a lytell byllage / called Ermyng  
This noble prynces / and dere derlyng  
With many great vertues / of grace illumynate  
Magnifyed her parage / and royall astate.

This blessed Audry / from her yonge aeye  
Was dysposed euer / vnto sadnes  
Obedyent lowly / vnto her parentage  
Encreasyng in vertue / and constaunt sobrynes  
Worldely pleasures / dysportes / and wantonnes  
Lyghtnes of language / and all presumpcyon  
In this sayd byrgyn / had no domynacyon.

Sad and demure / she was in countenaunce  
Nothyng enclyned / vnto fragylyte  
Benyng and pacyent / without perturbaunce  
Meke / curteys / gentyll / full of humylyte  
Prýde / statelenes / and sensualityte  
Were not in her soude / by any condycyon  
Curteyse in byhauour / vnto euery persone.



No man was greued / nor toke dyspleasure  
At this sayd mayden / in her fathers hall  
Euery honest persone / and reasonable creature  
Were pleased with her / bothe one and all  
None dyscontent / pryuate nor generall  
She was so meke / and full of pacynce  
That people desyred / to come to her presence.

She was beauteous / fayre and amiable  
Pleasaunte to beholde / in gyftes of nature  
Her countenaunce comly / swete / louely / and stable  
Nothyng dysposed / vnto worldely pleasure  
More lyke an angell / by all coniecture  
Than a fragyll mayde / of sensuall appetyte  
For in bayne pleasures / she had no delyte.

When that she came / to yeres of dyscrecyon  
Dyuers her moeued / in way of maryage  
Some offered ryches / royalte / and renowne  
Some other possessyons / landes and herytage  
And some the sufferaynte / her mynde to asswage  
All these she refused / for the loue of Ihesu  
To whome she auowed / her chastyte full tru.

After that Venus / had her longe assayled  
To peruerte her mynde / to worldly affeccyon  
And of all nettes and engynes / therof had sayled  
Than came to her presence / a prynce of renowne  
Called duke Combert / of the east regyon  
Whiche longe desyred / to haue her in spousage  
At the laste optayned / the wyll of her parentage.



Unto whiche thyng / he wolde neuer enclyne  
For all the mocyon / of her hye parentes  
Tyll she was assured / by heuenly doctryne  
To kepe her byrgynye / clere in conscyens  
Than she consented / without concupyscens  
And with the sayd duke / she lyued in chastyte  
Bothe mayden and wyfe / almost yeres thre.

After whose dethe / she remayned in Ely  
In fastyng / prayer / bygyls / and penaunce  
Whiche place was gyuen / to her Joynt and dowry  
By Combert her husbande / with great pleasaunce  
This yle of Ely / by deuyne purueaunce  
With muddy waters / is compased aboute  
Theyr enemyes to greue / and strongely to holde out.

Thyder came Egbyrt / kyng of the north parte  
To desyre saynt Audry / in matrymony  
To whome she wolde neuer / consent in herte  
For no maner counseyll / that myght be done truly  
Tho her syster Serburge / moeued her tenderly  
Tyll the angell of god / assured her to be  
Quene / wyfe / and mayde / keppynge byrgynye.

Than Audry graunted / maryed for to be  
Unto this foresayd / noble kyng Egfryde  
And at the maryage / was great solempnyte  
Tryumphes honoures / on euery syde  
Great cost and royalte / they dyd prouyde  
Frome Ely departed / bnto his owne place  
In the North parte dwellynge / with great solace.

By the grace of our lord god / moost of myght  
And helpe of his mother / blessed mayd mary  
By prayer of Audy / and by myracle ryght  
Togyder they lyued / bothe in pure chastyte  
The naturall mocyon / of his lascypte  
Was shortly flaked / and feruent desyre  
By myracle / as water quenched the fyre.

When he apperceyued / her asured constaunce  
Her perfyte holynes / and chaste contynence  
His herte reioiced / of her contynuaunce  
Of whome she desired / with humble reuerence  
And synguler supplicacyon / to haue fre lysence  
At Canwod abbay / to enter relygyon  
Whiche the kynge graunted / for her deuocyon.

Saynt Ebba syster / unto saynt Oswolde  
Was abbesse and ruler / of that congregacyon  
Where blessed Audy / ryght as she wolde  
Was reuerently receyued / into relygyon  
And after the yere / of her probacyon  
Professed there was / by bysshop Wylfryde  
Where all worldly honours / she set on syde.

Frome thens she departed / to the ple of Ely  
More quyetly to lyue / out of busynesse  
For drede of the kynge / her husbände truly  
Purposynge to take her / frome that holynesse  
She toke two maydens / with her doubtlesse  
And in theyr Journay / our lord of his grace  
Shewed dyuers myracles / at eche restynge place.



The archebysshop of yorke / Wylfrýde her confessour  
Was depyved frome his benyfice / by the kynge cruelly  
Observed pacyence / laudynge our sauour  
And folowed saynt Audry / to the place of Ely  
Whiche (as afore is sayd) was her Joynt and dowry  
And electe her abbesse / on that congregacyon  
Moost worthy to be / for her holy conuersacyon.

Where Audry buylded / a chyrche of our lady  
With helpe of kynge Aldulph / her brother naturall  
Dystaunt a myle / frome the olde monastery  
founded by saynt Austyn / for meryte spyrytuall  
Whiche place all desolate / she edyfied full specyall  
By her prouysyon / an other noble monastery  
The yere of grace / fyre hundreth seuenty and thre.

When the werke was ended / as her wyll was  
She endowed the abbay / with fraunches and lyberte  
And gaue the hole yle of Ely / to that place  
With all commodytes / profettes / and yssues fre  
Frome all exaccyons / exempte clerely to be  
Of kynge and bysshop / confyrmed it at Rome  
With all prelates & prynces / consentynge of this regno

In short tyme and space / to Audry dyd resorte  
Relygious men and women / a great company  
Professed in that place / for theyr ghostly conforste  
Renounsynge bayne pleasures / & honours transitory  
Amonge whome saynt Werburge / professed solemply  
Promysed in audyence / to lyue a lyfe monestycall  
After saynt Benettes rule / for the lyfe eternall.



Also the yere of grace / fyre hundreth seventy and nyne  
In the moneth of Julii / in the nynt h kalendas  
To heuen departed / saynt Audry the quene  
Than reygnyng in Kent / kyng Lothary by grace  
Aldulph in eest Englande / her brother whiche was  
Kyng Offryde her husbände / in Northumberlande  
Also kyng Ethelrede / than reygnyng in Mercelande

**C**A breue rehersal of y<sup>e</sup> lyfe of saynt Serburge / graund  
mother to saynt Werburge. And of her comynge to Ely  
to her syster Audry from Shepay monastery. Ca. xix.

**T**He holy matrone / and quene saynt Serburge  
A kynges doughter / & moder to kynges twayne  
Syster to saynt Audry / & graundmother to Werburge  
Of noble parentage / is comen certayne  
Of two realmes descendynge / lynyally and playne  
By her father / from the realme of eest Englande  
And by her mother / from Northumberlande.

Her father saynt Anna / as sayth myne auctour  
Was kyng of the eest parte / sone to Egnicius  
Whiche Anna was maryed / with moche honour  
To Hereswith / doughter to kyng Herericius  
And syster to saynt Hylde / the byrgyn gracyous  
To whome saynt Edwyn / the glorvous martyr  
Kyng of Northumberlande / was great graundfather.

This sayd kyng Anna / lyued a longe space  
In welthe / worshyp / honour / and prosperyte  
With his quene Hereswith / by synguler grace  
Obyeruyng Justyce / pacynce / and equitye

Kepte the preceptes / of god almyghte  
Mercyfull and lyberall / to the poore in payne  
Whiche kynge by Denda / was murdered and slayne.

As the ryuer passeth / oftetymes the heed fountayne  
The lytell grasse or ympe / transcendeth the tree  
Lykewyle theyr chyldren / encreased certayne  
In mekenes / pacyence / and perfyte charyte  
Aboue theyr parentes / in vertue and benygnyte  
So that theyr name / lynage / and hys estate  
By them was magnyfyed / praysed and decorate.

Kynge Anna and Hereswith / had a noble yssue  
Syre goodly chyldren / pleasaunt to beholde  
None fayrer in this lande / myndyng all vertue  
And to all good maners / dysposed manyfolde  
yet was theyr fayrenes / not equall to be tolde  
To theyr deuocyon / and synguler goodnes  
Whose names expressed / ben afore doubteles.

Serburge the eldest / of the systers all  
Instructe by her parentes / in vertuous dyscyplyne  
folowynge theyr counsell / in herte full specyall  
Prepared her soule / after theyr doctryne  
for aboue the age / of so yonge a femynyne  
So that euery day / by grace and wysdoome  
In her dyd growe / some plant of deuocyon.

In all this realme / dylated was her fame  
That whan she approached / vnto lawfull aege  
Prynces / dukes / erles / herynge of her name  
Desyred to haue Serburge / in maryage  
Merburge. g.iii.



And busily laboured / bnto her parentage  
This mayd was maryed / with honour full excellent  
Unto Ercombert / the noble kynge of Kent.

To whome kynge Ethelbyct / graundfather was  
The fyrst chrysten kynge / of Saxons and chefe flour  
Baptysed by saynt Austyn / thughe heuenly grace  
He was to holy chyrche / a specyall benefactour  
Monasteryes and pryores / founded with great honoure  
Kynge Cadwalde his sone / exemple of hym toke  
Whiche was father to Ercombert / as sayth my boke.

This lady Serburge / circumfused with grace  
After her desyre / and vertuous entent  
Had leuer the monastery / than the sayre palace  
The chyrche to bylte / than with maryage be lent  
But to her parentes / she was euer obedynt  
Folowynge theyr counseyll / and of her frendes dere  
In lawfull maryage / toke the sayd kynge her fere.

A noble generacyon / she hadde by the kynge  
Egbyct and Lothary / two prynces prepotent  
And two holy doughters / in bertue shynynge  
Ermenylde and Erhengode / by lynyall descent  
This Ermenylde maryed / with honour equyvalent  
Unto kynge Aulfer / had a royall yssue  
The glorious Werburge / replete with bertue.

Her syster Erhengode / refused btterly  
Honours / worshyp / and worldly possessyon  
Ryches / maryage / and pleasures transytory  
Went bnto Fraunce / with humble deuocyon



At the Cytee of Burges / entred relygion  
Where Ethelberge her aunt / was ruler and abbesse  
Togyder they lyued / in perfyte holynesse.

This honorable Serburge / and blessed matrone  
Refusynge worldly honours / and solemnyte  
Preferred mekenesse / and perfyte deuocyon  
Above all ryches / power and dygnyte  
Auoyded ambycyon / obserued humylyte  
Upon poore people / euer had compassion  
And them releued / with due mynystracyon.

She made her palace / manytymes an hospytall  
Her pryuate cubyle / a deuoute oratory  
As a kynde mother amiable / in courte and in hall  
Mekely fulfylled / the seuen werkes of mercy  
Oftetymes in the chyrche / selde amonge compaigny  
yet euer whan she myght / haue tyme and space  
Magnyfyed and praysed / our lorde in secrete place.

She instructe her husbände / in ghostly vertu  
To great holynesse / and synguler perfeccyon  
So by her counseyll / with the grace of Ihesu  
Frome infydelyte / purged was that regyon  
Destroyed theyr ydolles / theyr sectes euerychone  
Restaured temples / vnto chrystes honour  
Founded monasteryes / by her cost and labour.

The kyng by her mocyon / commaunded straitly  
All his people and subiectes / vpon sharpe correccyon  
To obserue prayer / and penaunce deuoutely  
And truly for to fast / the holy tyme of Lenton

Werburge.

g.iiii.

The archbysshop Theodorus / and fathers of relygyon  
Consyderynge her pacyence / and benygnyte  
Reioysed in her dedes / and prayled the trynpte.

When the famous Ercombert / the sayd kynge of Kent  
foure & twenty yere had reygned / in honour full royall  
With blessed Serburge / his quene excellent  
Than he departed / frome this lyfe mortall  
The quene prepared / the obsequyes funerall  
With great lamentacyon / and great royalte  
As was conuenient / for his state and degre.

After that Serburge / refused worldely pleasure  
Entred relygyon / professed chastyte  
At Shepay monastery / in Kent full sure  
Bylded at her cost / full honorable  
After electe Abbesse / and ruler of that compagne  
To whome she was / a myrrour of mekenes  
And exemple of vertue / and proued holynes.

As she was occupied / in medytacyon  
An heuenly messenger / to her was sent  
She wynged how for synne / and transgressyon  
Englande shulde suffer / great punysment  
And be subdued / with greuous torment  
Wherefore she leste / in good rule that place  
And dyd electe to them / an other abbace.

Serburge toke lycence / of her systers all  
Commendynge them / vnto the trynpte  
And so departed / fro her chyldren spryтуall  
With labour attayned / to the hous of Elze



There to be subiecte / to Her syster Audrye  
And to her doctryne / apply her entent  
Unto relygyon / euer founde obedyent.

Saynt Audry was gladde / of her systers compynge  
In lyke maner / were all the hole congregacyon  
With myrthes and solace / in soule reioysynge  
To haue the presence / of so worthy a persone  
There lyued togyder / in perfyte deuocyon  
Tyll blessed Audry / frome this lyfe mortall  
Departed was / to the lyfe eternall.

After whose buryall / Serburge was electe  
To be abbesse and ruler / ouer that couent  
Whiche to all vertue / her mynde dyd erecte  
And the .xvi. yere after / with labours dyligent  
She translate saynt Audry / that noble presydent  
Beynge hole incorrupte / also substancyall  
In body and in besture / by grace supernall.

**C** How saynt Ermenylde after the dethe of kyng Aulfer  
her husbade was made a nonne at Ely / vnder her mother  
saynt Serburge abbesse / and Werburge her deuoute  
doughter. Ca. xx.

**O**f Mercys the kyng / whā the foresayd Aulfere  
Had regned in honour / worshyp and royalte  
With saynt Ermenylde his quene / fully .xvii. yere  
Unto euerlastynge blyss / departed than he  
And buryed was / with moche solempnyte  
In Lychefeld chyrche / after hym there dyd succede  
Into the kyngdome / his brother Ethelrede.



The quene for her husbande / made great lamentacyon  
Dolefully lamentynge / nyght and day his departure  
As nature enquyred / enduryng a longe season  
Remayned in wydohode / and mournynge besture  
yet after all heuynesse / penaunce / and dysconforture  
She reioysed in soule / to be at lyberte  
Entendynge relyggon / by grace of the trynityte.

Soone she departed / to the hous of Ely  
Refusynge this worlde / pleasures possessyon  
Instauntly requyred / with perfyte humyltyte  
To be a moynes / accepte in relyggon  
Gladde was the abbesse / of her conuersyon  
And thanked our lorde / of his specyall grace  
So dyd all the systers / within the sayd place.

Her naturall mother / blessed Serburge  
That tyme was lady / and chefe presydent  
There was professed / her doughter Werburge  
An exemple of mekenes / to all the couent  
Ermenylde thanked god / and was obedyent  
To her mother Serburge / a myrrour of vertu  
Also to her doughter / the spouses of Ihesu.

It passeth mannes reason / playnly to expresse  
Her vertuous lyfe / and ghostly conuersacyon  
In prayer / penaunce / and proued mekenesse  
In perfyte obedyence / and synguler deuocyon  
In bygyls / abstynence / and in hye perfeccyon  
The cotydyane labours / her body to chastyce  
That her soule may be / to god true sacryfyce.

By cause that Werburge / in order was senpoure  
Her mother Ermenylde / gaue her the sufferaynte  
Preferrynge her doughter / with mekenes and honour  
But yet her doughter / of a naturall amyte  
Preferred her mother / with humble senporyte  
And so bytwene them / was a swete contencion  
Wheder shulde more subiecte be / to other in relygion.

Afore whan Ermenylde / was vnder maryage  
Unto holy matrones / she was comparable  
Sara / Rebecca / Rachell / and Sybell sage  
And saynt Elysabeth / with other mo honorable  
Now in relygion / she is moost notable  
Knownen by her vertues / and sadde dysposycyon  
What vnder matrimony / was her intencion.

Ermenylde subdued / by synguler deuyne grace  
All fragyll mocyons / and sensualyte  
Lyke maner as Iudyth / Olofernes slayne hace  
She mortyfied all pleasures / lustes and holupte  
Lyke wyse as Iaell / dyd the prynce Sylare  
A duches of vertue / as whylom was Delbora  
Used the oratory / in prayer as dyd Anna.

After the departure / and wofull buryall  
Of Sexburge her mother / abbesse and lady  
Her doughter Ermenylde / the blessed monyall  
Was chosen abbesse / and ruler of Ely  
As sheweth dan Wyllyam / of Maluysbury  
How fyrst was Audy / than Sexburge her syster  
Afterwarde was abbesse / Ermenylde her doughter.



The lyfe of Ermenylde / was euer vertuous  
Pleasaunt to god / and her sisters euerychone  
In the syght of god / her dethe was precyous  
Playnly notyfied / by her conuersacyon  
She vertuously gouerned / her congregacyon  
Frome this lyfe departed / to eternall glory  
As sayth her legende / the Idus of february.

And buryed was / with moche lamentacyon  
In the holy monastery / and house of Ely  
Amonge her parentage / and congregacyon  
Where she is thyned / with her aunt saynt Audry  
And with her mother / saynt Serburge ryche  
For whome our sauyour / of his specyall grace  
Sheweth dayly myracles / in that sayd place.

One of the myracles / we shall now rehers  
Our lord for her shewed / at Ely abbay  
After her transacyon / the story dothe expres  
It fortunied in Whytson weke / vpon a thursday  
An Englysshman was bounden / in wofull aray  
Fetered with yrons / bothe on handes and fete  
Wrongfully accused / as ye may all wete.

By instaunt request / he gate hym lycence  
To byspte the tombe / of saynt Ermenylde  
Whome he requyred / with humble reuerence  
And meke petycyon / frome the herte full mylde  
To be deliuered / and fully reconfylde  
Whose humble desyre / and synguler supplicacyon  
Was fully graunted / to his consolacyon.



At this tyme / whan this holy man was prayenge  
Whan the Deken redde the holy gospell  
By meane of Ermenylde / to our lorde and kyng  
Frome his handes and fete / the yrons done sell  
By grace aboue nature / merueylously to tell  
That the sayd yrons / insyght of all the bretherne  
Sprange bp sodenly / and lyght vpon the aulter.

¶ Aliud miraculum.

**A**nother myracle / declare now may we  
Done at the sayd Cely / by this holy matrone  
In presence of the pyro / and all the fraternyte  
Whiche pyro of this mater / had best notycon  
Ascole mayster of Innocentes / after the custome  
Gaue lyfence / vpon saynt Ermenyldes day  
To all his chyldren / to sport them in play.

Whan the feest / and solempnyte was done  
The yonge tender chyldren / wanton and nedlygent  
Dredynge theyr mayster / for fere of correccyon  
To the holy thyrne / they assembled full dyligent  
Trustynge therby of pardon / after theyr entent  
Desyred theyr mayster / for saynt Ermenyldes sake  
To pardon theyr trespas / and no dyspleasure take.

The mayster fulfylled / with hastynes and euny  
Toke them frome the tombe / with great indygnacyon  
Withouth dyscrecyon / punysshed them greuouly  
Gyuyng no honour / to the saynt ne deuocyon  
Rebuked them sore / sayenge with insultacyon  
Crowe ye to be spared / from punysshment this day  
For saynt Ermenyldes sake / nay nay do way.

After all this done / the nexte nyght folowynge  
When the sayd mayster / to his bedde was gone  
His great unkyndenes / saynt Ermenylde remembrynge  
He warned hym Justly / after his guerdon  
His handes and his fete / prompte to persecucion  
Were sodenly smytten / made lame / contracte also  
No power had to ryse / to moeue nor to go.

This todayne punysshement / langour / confusyon  
Aured hym greuouly in all his body  
Moost terryble of all / of helthe desperacyon  
Inwardly hym troubled / with peynes horryble  
But yet by grace / he thought best remedy  
Sende for his chyl dren / vpon the other day  
Humble asked them pardon / in a wofull aray.

Despyrnyng his scolers / for loue and charyte  
To cary hym moost carefull / to her sepulture  
To requyre for hym grace / helthe and prosperyte  
Of god and saynt Ermenylde / with all theyr cure  
They toke hym tenderly / ye may me leue full sure  
Amonge them all / with mynde delygent  
And brought to the shryne / this wretched impotent.

They prayed for hym / to our blessed sauour  
And to saynt Ermenylde / a longe tyme and space  
Knelynge on theyr knees / wepyng full sore  
In prayer and psalmody / for his helthe and solace  
And so contynuyng / by our lordes great grace  
He that afore was lame / bothe on fote and hande  
Restored to helthe / departed hole and sounde.



**T** How kynge Ethelrede seyng the holy conuersacyon  
of Werburge his nece / made her lady and abbesse at We  
don / Trentam / and Humbery. And by her counseill and  
exsample was made moke at Bardeney abbay. Ca. xxi.

**T** He famous pryncce / and foresayd Ethelrede  
Brother to kynge Aulfer / as lawfull enherytour  
To the sayd kyngedome / dyd nexte hym succede  
Electe of his peeres / with worship and honour  
Permytted by his chyrche / to be theyr gouernour  
Bycause pryncce Kenrede / his brother sone  
Was yonge and not able / to rule his kyngdome.

This sayd kynge Ethelrede / clerely consyderynge  
With due circumstaunce / the hye perfeccyon  
Of Werburge his nece / and vertuous lyuynge  
Her great holynesse / and ghostly conuersacyon  
Dayly encreasyng / with feruent deuocyon  
The excellent fame / and myracles full ryght  
Shewed by our sauyour / bothe day and nyght.

These good examplers / grounded in vertu  
Moued kynge Ethelrede / in soule and in mynde  
And clerely conuerted / throwe the grace of Ihesu  
To despyse this worlde / wretched and blynde  
Pryncypally by grace / wyten as we fynde  
For her great goodnes / and vertues excellent  
He made her lady / ruler / and presydent.

Ouer all the nonnes / of euery monastery  
Within his realme / to gouerne and to guyde  
To instructe and informe / and to exemplyfy



To encrease deuocyon / vpon euery syde  
Vertue to exalte / to subdue vyce and pryde  
That holy relygion / pleasaunt to chryst Ihesu  
Myght dayly encrease / frome vertu to vertu.

Also he gaue Werburge / great possessyon  
Landes / and rentes / ryches withall  
To edify and repayre / places of relygion  
After her desyre / with fauour specyall  
Wherwith she buylded / famous memoryall  
Two fayre monasteryes / Trentam and Humbury  
Possessed with rentes / landes / and lyberte.

Also by sufferaunce / of the sayd kynge truly  
She translate the kynges maner of Medon  
Whiche was in Hamptonshyre / vnto a monastery  
Of holy women / obseruyng relygion  
Suffyciently endowed / with lybertes / possessyon  
Of whiche sayd places / she had the gouernaunce  
As worthy maystres / all vertue to auance.

The pere of grace / fyre hundred foure score and nyen  
As sheweth myne auctour / a Bryton Giraldus  
Kynge Ethelred / myndynge moost the blyss of heuen  
Edyfied a collage chyrche / notable and famous  
In the subbarbes of Chester / pleasaunt and beauteous  
In the honour of god / and the Baptyst saynt Iohan  
With helpe of bysshop Aulfryce / and good exortacyon.

Also at the humble / and synguler supplicacyon  
Of blessed Egwyn / bysshop of worcestur  
This kynge gaue a place / for a fundacyon

To buylde a monastery / to relygious brethur  
At Eufam byon Auen / for heuenly tresur  
With a large precynct / to compas all the abbay  
More quyetly to serue / our sauour nyght and day.

After this tyme / Ethelrede the kynge  
By his counseyll maryed / a beautefull lady  
Called quene Dstryde / a woman of good lpyunge  
Borne in the North parte / doughter to kynge Oswy  
To whome saynt Oswalde / was vncle truly  
The yssue bwtwene them / after to succede  
Was a noble prynce / nomynate Colrede.

Agaynst his enemyes / the kynge gate byctory  
Fortunate in batayle / sore oppressed Kent  
In all this regyon / famous was his chyualry  
Namely he subdued / at the water of Trent  
Egfrýde of Northumberlande / a kynge auncient  
His brother in lawe / whan Egfrýde agaynst reason  
Entred his landes / by subtyll intrusyon.

But after that Dstryde / his quene was slayne  
By people of the North parte / moost cruelly  
The kynge frome that tyme / by grace certayne  
Chaunged his maners / and lpyunge dayly  
Frome temporall cures / and busynesse worldly  
To ghostly werkes / and contemplacyon  
Sekynge for heuen / with pure deuocyon.

Specyally he folowed / saynt Werburge counsell  
Asyng hym after / her swete ghostly doctryne  
The clere examplis / as we afore dyd tell  
Werburge. h.i.



Moued his conscience / to ghostly dyscypline  
With suche contricyon / by specyall grace deuynne  
That all bayne pleasures / and honours transytory  
Were clere expulsed / and put out of memory.

This kynge refused / his septrre and crowne  
Clothes of Tyshew / and purpull full royall  
With ryches / lybertes / pleasures / possessyon  
For the loue of Ihesu / in herte pryncypall  
And for the meryte / of his soule helthe withall  
So whan he had reygned / nyne and twenty yere  
He chaunged his habyte / sayth the story clere.

At a relygyous place / nomynate Bardenay  
In Lyncolne shyre / vnder his domynyon  
Synguler byloued / of hym alway  
Desyred the habyte / with meke supplicacyon  
And was receyued / professynge relygyon  
Euer after to obserue / the essencys the  
Obedyence / chastyte / and wylfull pouerte.

He assygned his crowne / and temporall dygnyte  
Unto prynce Kenrede / his brother sone  
As true enherytour / to haue regalyte  
For in pure obedyence / prayer and medytacyon  
Ethelrede encreased / with feruent deuocyon  
And as declareth / wylliam of Maluysbury  
After was made abbot / of the sayd monastery.

**T**he holy conuersacyon of kynge Kenred brother to  
saynt Werburge / & how he refused his crowne / and was  
made monke at Rome / & ther departed a holy cōfessour.  
Ca.xxii.



**S**o whan kynge Etheldrede / by heuently grace  
At Bardenay abbay / professed relygyon  
Than prynce Kenrede / his successour was  
And toke the Empryre / the septre and the crowne  
With moche worthyp / royalte / and renowne  
As nexte of inherytaunce / by law naturall  
To be kynge of Mercyens / by dyscent lynyall.

This noble kynge Kenrede / replete with vertu  
Brother to Werburge / obserued truly  
The commaundementes of god / & his lawes moost tru  
Obedyent to our sauour / and lorde almyghty  
Loued holy chyrche / moost tenderly  
Mynystred Justyce / to his subiectes all  
Mercyfull to the poore / pyteous and lyberall.

In all his realme / was no dyuersyte  
Malyce was subdued / rancour and debate  
Vertue encreased / true loue and charyte  
Enuy was exyled / and all pryuy hate  
Thefte / murthur / robbery / were founde at no gate  
True men myght lyue / without beryaçon  
Pollers / promoters / had no domynacyon.

He gaue to our sauour / and bysshop Egwyn  
For ghosly meryte / with moche honoure  
Of tenementes and landes / playnely to determyne  
Within worceturshyre .iiii. score and foure  
To maynteyne the monastery / spoken of before  
Guesham vpon Auen / byfore lawfull wytnes  
As the legende of Egwyn / truly dothe expres.

Werburge.

h.ii.

To the courte of Rome / kynge Kenred went  
So dyd Offa kynge / of the eest Saxons  
Also bysshop Egwyn / by one assent  
Deuoutly to bysyt / all the hole stacyons  
Of the cytee of Rome / with humble supplicacyons  
Thankynge our lorde / of his mercy  
Hath them preserued / and all theyr company.

This holy bysshop / and kynge Kenrede  
Offered to our holy father / pope boneface  
With mekenes deuocyon / for ghostly mede  
Afore his collage / wytnes in that case  
The foresayd monastery / and relygyous place  
Frome that day euer after / to be clerely exempte  
To the popes holynes / inmedyaty obedyent.

When they had optayned / perfyte expedycon  
Of all theyr bulles / after theyr entent  
They toke lycence / and had the popes beneson  
And towarde Englade / retourned and went  
Praylynge our lorde / with herte and loue feruent  
For theyr good spede / and prosperous Journay  
Preserued in good helthe / all to theyr countray.

After all this done / Kenrede the sayd kynge  
Commaunded to be had / a counseyll generall  
By letters myssyue / his peeres and lordes cytynge  
Shortly to be present / with hym one and all  
As well the spyrytualte / as the temporall  
The Seyn was kepte / at a place called Alue  
And thyder assembled / his prelates of degre.



Berthtunaldus / the archebysshop of Canturbury  
The archbysshop of yorke / called Wylfryde  
With bysshops / suffreganes / archdekenes many  
Dukes / erles / barons / vpon euery tyde  
Knyghtes / esquyers / and comunes that tyde  
Were redy to knowe / the kynges mynde and pleasure  
Well ordred in place / and scyence kepte sure.

This glorious Kenrede / crowned with golde  
Clothed in purpull / rose vp fro his place  
After due salutacyon / the cause mekely he tolde  
Why he for them sende / and wherfore it was  
That they shulde testyfy / with hym in this case  
What landes he gaue / towarde the fundacyon  
Of the sayd monastery / with grete deuocyon.

And how for that abbay / he went to Rome  
And made the place subiecte / immediatly  
To our father boniface / and gate an exemptyon  
For euer to remayne / to the sayd monastery  
With pardons and pryuyleges / there redde openly  
And many other benefytes / of great commodyte  
Wryten in theyr grauntes / who lyst them to se.

Requyringe the lordes / spyrytuall and temporall  
To graunte to the same / with good entent  
And it to confyrme / and roborate specyall  
With charters and dedes / and seales patent  
To whose petycyon / they dyd all consent  
Made confyrmacions / and grauntes them amonge  
With a terryble sentence / who dothe the place wronge.

Merburge.

h.iii.



Kynge Kenrede consyderynge / the great holynes  
Of his noble parentes / his vncles euerychone  
Theyr royall progeny / the sufferaunt goodnes  
From this lyfe transytory / to heuen agone  
Namely the vertue / and feruent deuocyon  
Of his systre Werburge / and his aunces all  
Moued his mynde / to seke for lyfe eternall.

And as saynt Bede sayth / whan this noble kynge  
Had regned fyue yere / in great prosperyte  
He forsoke this worlde / and chaunged his lyfynge  
Refusynge his crowne / septr / and dygnyte  
All bayne honours / ryches and regalyte  
And made his vncles sone / prynce Coelrede  
To take his empyre / after hym to succede.

So with all gentylnes / and humylyte  
The kynge of his subiectes / toke leue specyall  
Commendynge his people / to the trynpte  
Them to conserue / spyrytuall and temporall  
Of his departure / dolorous were they all  
Thus for the loue / of our sauoure  
He refused this worlde / pleasures and honoure.

And went to Rome agayne / the yere of grace  
Seuen hundreth and eyght / by full computacyon  
Aysytynge the stacyons / frome place to place  
There was professed / to saynt Benettes relygyon  
Used bygyls / fastynge / prayer / medytacyon  
Where this holy monke / frome this lyfe transytory  
With vertu departed / to eternall glory.

**O**f y<sup>e</sup> feruent & ghostly deuocyon of saynt Werburge  
& vertuous gouernaunce of her places / & of y<sup>e</sup> great humi-  
lite she bled to her sisters / & al other creatures. Ca.xxiii.

**T**his venerable Werburge / & moynes gracypous  
For her great vertue / and perfyte holynesse  
Electe to be gouernour / ouer the nonnes relygeous  
By her vnckle kynge Ethelrede / of his goodnesse  
ouer dyuers monasteryes (as is sayd) expresse  
Was consecrate abbesse / and lady gracypous  
By the bysshop of Lychesfelde / nomynat Serwulfus.

And thus she departed / fro the hous of Ely  
Wherin she bled / heuenly medytacron  
With lycence optayned / in mynde sad and heuy  
So were the systers / and all the congregacyon  
Of her departure / knowynge her conuersacyon  
But as wolde charyte / they had great gladnes  
Knowynge by her vertue / relygpon to encrese.

The spouses of Ihesu / and floure of benygnyte  
Consyderynge her selfe / a lady and presydent  
Ordered her monasteryes : ryght well and wysele  
Receyued in systers / chaste / humble / obedyent  
ouer them made rulers / vertuous / and pacient  
Her subiectes to instructe / and counseyll day and nyght  
Vertue to exalte / and vyce depyue aryght.

This noble abbesse / remembrynge her duty  
What charge it is / to rule a congregacyon  
Humble requyred the grace of god almyghty  
And delygently prepared / to supple her rowme.



Pryncypally she gaue / to them euerychone  
Perfyte exsample / of vertue in her dede  
With vertuous doctryne / the same to procede.

A myrrour of mekenesse / she was to them all  
A floure of chastyte / and well of clennes  
The fruyte of obedyence / in her was specyall  
Refusyng bayne pleasures / honours and ryches  
Content with lytell / an exsample of lowlynnes  
As dothe belonge / vnto wylfull pouerte  
Pryde ha no resydence / but all humblyte.

She was a mynyster / rather than a maystres  
Her great preemynence / caused no presumpcyon  
She was a handmayd / rather than a pryores  
Seruyng her systers / with humble subieccyon  
Subduyng her body / to penaunce and afflyccyon  
Subiecte to the soule / as reason wolde shulde be  
A true sacryfyce / offered to the trynyte.

It was no merueyll / tho all her couent  
Under suche a ruler / encreased in vertu  
Seyng her exsample / afore them dayly present  
Euer augmentyng / thowhe the helpe of Ihesu  
Worldly desyres / she clerely dyd subdue  
She neuer ware lynon / by day or by nyght  
All ryche bayne bestures / she set by them but lyght.

In prayer medytacyon / the tyme she dyspent  
Proued : for euery nyght / longe afore matyns  
She wolde byryse / at an houre conuenient  
And deuoutely say / afore our lordes presens



Dauid spalter holly knelynge / with great reuerence  
Or that her systers / came to the oratory  
To say dyuine seruyce / kyndyng her all redy.

At after matyngs / she vbled contemplacyon  
Contynually abydyng / vnto the day lyght  
Prostrate on the grounde / or knelyng in deuocyon  
Weepyng full tenderly / with teeres downeryght  
Many holy praysons / she sayd day and nyght  
Pyteous / mercyable / and full of charyte  
To the poore people / in theyr necessitye.

This lady obserued / suche sharpe abstinence  
That one dayly repast / wolde her well suffice  
Delycate dyshe meates / were put out of her presence  
So nature were content / in moost humble wyse  
The Worde of god / was moost delycate seruyse  
Kyndyng moche more / the soule to satisfye  
Than please and content / her enemy the body.

These sayd examples / with many other mo  
Pleasaunte vnto Ihesu / she taught her couent  
Them to preserve / frome theyr mortall fo  
By synguler vertue / grace to augment  
Her precepte and lyuyng / were euer correspondent  
She neuer commaunded syster / do any thyng  
But it was fulfilled / in her owne doyng.

She exorted her chyldren / euer to deuocyon  
With manyfolde doctrynes / ydlenes to excheue  
Lyke a tender mother / had pyte and compassyon  
She dayly fedde them / and nourysht in all vertue  
Werburge. i.i.

And delygently prayed / our saupour Ihesu  
Them to preserue / of his infynyte grace  
Frome peryll of peryschyng / in blyss to se his face.

Also the .xii. degrees / of humylyte  
Pacyence / quyetnes / and great perfeccyon  
Were well obserued / with true loue and charyte  
Amonge her systers / the hole congregacyon  
And the thre essencys / of relygyon  
Wylfull pouerte / chastyte / and obedyence  
were truly fulfilled / proued by the consequence.

As for a pastyme / amonge her systers all  
She caused to be redde / auoydynge ydlenesse  
The swete legendary / for a memoryall  
And Aitas patrum / the wyng great swetenesse  
With other narracyons / of grace and goodnesse  
Ofttymes to her couent / she had a comyn sayenge  
Please god and loue hym / and doubte ye nothyng.

All reders excuse me / tho I can not expresse  
For lacke of lernynge / the vertues morall  
The hye perfeccyon / and proued holynesse  
Of this pure byrgyn / and sanctymonyall  
Wherwith was decorate / her lyfe monestycall  
Manifest With myracles / by meryte of her mekenesse  
As the true hystory / playnly dothe expresse.

The worthy myracles / of this byrgyn pure  
Oylated were / thugh all this regyon  
By deuyne sufferauce / aboue nature  
Profytable / to euery chrysten synguler persone



In sekeneſſe / trouble / peyne or heracyon  
Of her they haue refuge / helpe / and ſocoure  
By her merytes / and prayer / that euery honoure.

Her merytes were / moche more commendable  
Than were her myracles / manifeſt and playne  
For why by her merytes / famous and notable  
Sygnes and myracles / were ſhewed full playne  
In the houſe of Ely / by the grace of our ſufferayne  
And in euery place / where ſhe kepte reſydence  
Of whome parte ſolowen / in this rude ſentence.

¶ How at Medon wylde gees were pynned by her com-  
maundymment / & alſo releſhed & put at lyberte. Ca. xxiiii.

**T**his holy byrgyn / whan ſhe dwelled at Medon  
In Northamptonſhyr / with a deuoute couent  
Whiche place ſomtyme / was the kynges manſyon  
Translated to an abbay / by her commaundymment  
A myracle was done / by this noble preſydent  
As the true legende / playnly dothe vs ſay  
And all the inhabytauntes / vnto this preſent day.

A great multytude / ſomtyme of wylde gees  
Comunely called Gauntes / made a great deſcrypcyon  
Upon her landes / paſtures / waters / and feldeſ  
Deuourynge the cornes / and fruytes of Medon  
Greuous to her ſubiectes / within that poſſeſſyon  
The people coude fynde / no ſufficyent remedy.  
But ſhe wed theyr complainte / to Werburge theyr lady.

¶ Whan Werburge had herde / this greuous complainne  
Werburge. i. ii.



How the cornes were wasted / y<sup>e</sup> tenauntes hurte therby  
Her herte was moeued / with charyte than certayne  
To saue her fruytes / and helpe her company  
Wherefore she commaunded a seruaunt go hastely  
To dyue those wylde gees / & brynge home to her place  
There to be pynned / and punysshed for theyr trespase.

The messenger merueyled / and mused in his mynde  
Of this straunge message / stode styll in a study  
Knowynge it well / it passed course of kynde  
Wylde gees for to pynne / by any mannes polycy  
Syth nature hath ordeyned / suche byrdes to fly  
Supposynge his lady / had ben vnrasonable  
Commaundyng to do / a thyng vnpossyble.

With wordes of conforste / she sayd to hym agayne  
Go in my name / do my commaundymment  
The seruaunt went forth / thynkyng all but bayne  
Unto the foldes / where the byrdes were lent  
And sayd his message / with mynde and good entent  
My lady commaundes you / byrdes euerychone  
Afore me to go / vnto her proper mansyone.

A merueylous thyng / transcendyng nature  
Unto his wordes / the gees were obedyent  
Not one departed / fro thens ye may besure  
Of all the nombre / that there were present  
Towarde her place / afore hym they went  
Meekely / as yf they had reason naturall  
Unto her presence / he brought the gauntes all.

Dredefully daryng / comen now they be

They wynges traylynge / entred into the hall  
For great confusyon / after they kynde and propre  
Mournyng in theyr maner / abydynge one and all  
Her wyll and Iudgment / with mercy specyall  
Lamentynge all nyght / there in captiuite  
Tyll the morowe after / withouten lyberte.

All that same nyght / Werburge dyd contynue  
In deuoute prayers / and ympnes celestyall  
After her olde custome / vsed in all bertue  
In the mornynge after / the bydes that were thall  
With hye voyces (as yf it were) on her dyd call  
For grace and pardon / of theyr offence  
And of departure / to haue fre lycence.

Chan she full pyteous / to euery creature  
Upon these bydes hauynge compassyon  
Delyuered them / frome all daunger and cure  
Frely to departe / vnder this condycyon  
That none of them / vpon the lordshyp of Medon  
Shulde make destruccyon / nor lyght by any way  
On cornes or fruytes / neuer after that day.

Neuertheles a seruaunt / one of the gees dyd take  
And pryuely hydde it / agaynst iustyce and ryght  
Unknowynge to Werburge / such byby to make  
The bydes departed / moost glad to take theyr flyght  
From theyr tender Judge / but whan they saue in syght  
One of theyr felawes / taken frome theyr company  
The sayd great nombre / of gees retourned hastely.

They flewe ouer / this blessed byrgyns hall  
Werburge.



Mournyng and waylyng / after theyr entent  
And wolde not departe / but fast on her dyd call.  
yet they durst not lyght / for drede of her comaundment  
But in theyr maner & kynde they sayd / o swete president  
Why suffer ye suche wyckednes / done for to be  
Anendes our felawe / agaynst all ryght and charyte.

Merburge went fyrst / to knowe wherfore and why  
These byrdes retourned / so hastily certayne  
By grace she perceyued / the cause of it truly  
And tryed out the truthe / of all the mater playne  
She restaured the byrde / to his felyshyp agayne  
And gaue them a lesson / or they went her fro  
How they shulde prayse / theyr maker and sufferayne  
Sayenge (benedicite volucres celi domino)

But as Wyllyam Maluyshury / sheweth expresse  
The goos that was taken / and stolen afore away  
Was rosted and eten / the same nyght doubtlesse  
So whan it was asked / for vpon the other day  
The bare bones were brough / after this lady beray  
And there by the vertue / of her benedyccyon  
The byrde was restaured / and flewe away full soone.

Certaynly frome that tyme / vnto this present day  
As all the people knowe / dwellynge about Medon  
The foresayd wylde gees / attempten by no way  
To hurte theyr fruytes / ne lyght in that possessyon  
No merueyll it is / remembrynge the deuocyon  
And true loue she had / to god omnyppotent  
For vnto vertue / all thyng is obedyent.



**C** Now a tyrant without pyte punysshinge an Inno-  
cent was punyshed / & after made hole. Ca.rrb.

**F** Orther to declare / the pacyence and humylyte  
And the synguler grace / grounded in this abbas  
As in the true legende / playnly ye may se  
We shall parte rehers / to augment your solas  
Merburge had a seruaunte / whiche named was  
Alnotus a man / of meke conuersacyon  
Knownen by his merytes / after due probacyon.

Also a baylyfe she had / a cruell tyrant  
Whiche pyteously punyshed / without reason  
And wounded greuously / Alnot her seruaunt  
Without any greuaunce / at the place of Medon  
Merburge for pyte / and great compassyon  
Afore this captyfe / kneeled on her knee  
Prayenge hym to cease / for loue of the trynyte.

Sayenge why does thou punyssh / this innocent  
Causeles without mercy / whiche I byleue playne  
Is more acceptable / to our lorde omnyppotent  
Than many other be / for his mekenesse certayne  
The baylyfe at her prayer / wolde not refrayne  
But punyshed hym styll / in his fury and pyde  
Tyll the vengauce of god / fell on hym that tyde.

Incontynente his heed / his necke / and his face  
Were tourned backward / lyke a persone monstrous  
Contrary to nature / for his great trespass  
Cruciate with sorowe / and peynes hyduous  
Contynually encreasynge / to beholde pyteous  
Merburge. i.iiii.

At the last remembred / of the best remedy  
Fell prostrate to the fete / of Werburge his lady.

And cryed vpon her / with wofull chere  
Weeping / lamentynge / his great iniquyte  
My louely lady / and maystres moost dere  
Helpe me swete abbesse / in this necessyte  
I haue offended god / now pray for me  
And I wyll neuer / enduryng all my lyfe  
Dysplease no more / man / mayde / ne wyfe.

When Werburge consydered / his great contricyon  
His woofull herte / and lamentable crye  
Upon hym she had / tender compassion  
Beholdynge his greuaunce / and tender agony  
Good brother she sayd / who so wyll haue mercy  
Must be mercyable / as in prouerbe wyten is  
Who is without mercy / of mercy shall mys.

Call vnto mynde / thy owne wycked dede  
In punysshynge this poore man / without offence  
To se his punysshment / my herte sore dyd blede  
I kneeled afore thy fete / desyrynge indulgence  
Thou toke no regarde / to my prayer ne presence  
Wherefore the Justyce / of god almyghty  
Upon the is fallen / for thy synne todayly.

When she had ended / her ghostly exortacyon  
Perceyvinge hym penytent / with great humylyte  
Gladde to amende / byce and transgressyon  
Anone vnto prayer / she went with charyte  
Optyned forgyuenesse / of the blessed trynityte



His tynamy / restaured to his kynde agayne  
Bothe bodyly and ghostly / cured was certayne.

This foresayd Alnotus / by synguler grace  
Refused this worlde / pleasures and banys  
Went vnto wyldernesse / and machoryte was  
Whome theues martyred / to heuen blyss went he  
At Stow besyde Bukbydge / buried was trile  
For whome our lorde / of his infynyte goodnes  
She wed many myracles / affymynge his holynes.

¶ How dyuers prynces folowynge sensualyte inten-  
dyng to violate this byrgyn bi power / bi myracle were  
put to confusyon. Ca. xxvi.

**A** Nother sygne was she wed / by the kyng of blys  
Of a wanton pryncce / folowynge sensualyte  
And his fragyll appetyte / in doyng amys  
Entendynge by vyolence / power / and auctoryte  
To depriue Werburge / of her byrgynyte  
Escpyed a season / to fulfyll his entent  
Whan she was solytary / and no man there present.

By force than he began / this mayd to assaile  
But she trustynge in god / to be her protectour  
Escapynge his presence / cast her sacrat bayle  
For lyghtnesse and ease / to fle from the traytour  
The sonne beame receyued it / whiche haged that houre  
Whiche myracle sene / the pryncce fledde away  
The byrgyn was preserued / by grace that day.

¶ Another myracle / was done in Kent



In the byllage of Doo / yet full memorous  
A sensuall prynce / of wyched consent  
Purposed to maculate / this byrgyn gloryous  
Consyderynge her persone / so fayre and beauteous  
Carried the season / to fynde her solytary  
By power to oppresse / this gracyous lady.

When the tyme was comen / he thought conuenient  
After her furpously / he ranne a fast pace  
She knowynge his mynde / add vnchast entent  
Seynge no remedy / by man in that place  
Called to our sauoure / for his helpe and grace  
Sayenge blessed lorde / for thy endles pyte  
Defende me this daye / and saue my chastyte.

And as she fledde / frome this cruell persone  
She ranne for socour / to a great oke tree  
By grace the sayd tree / opened that same season  
Sufferynge this mayd / to haue sure and fre entree  
Wherby she escaped his / wyched tyrannye  
Whiche tree to this day / endurynge all the yere  
By myracle is bernaunte / freshe / grene / and clere.

Of the sayd oke tree / is a famous opynyon  
That no man may entre / the sayd concaupte  
In deedly synne bounden / without contrycyon  
But in clene perfyte lyfe / who soeuer he be  
May entre the sayd oke / with fre lyberte  
And nygh to that place / a chyrche is now dedycate  
In the honour of god / and werburge immaculate.

**C** Many other myracles / our blessed sauour

Shewed for this byrgyn / of his goodnes  
Conforte to the people / in sekenes and langour  
That to her wyll seke / in theyr dystresse  
Her excellent vertue / and great holynesse  
By sygnes and myracles / were dayly manifest  
To many a creature / with peynes opprest.

The same wherof sprange / so fast aboute  
Notyfied playne / in all this regyon  
The people approached / withouten doubte  
To knowe her blessed / and holy conuersacyon  
And of these myracles / to haue probacyon  
By the syght wherof / they myght all glorify  
With ioy and gladnesse / our lorde god almyghty.

There was no sekenesse / nor infyrmyte  
That mankynde had / nor beracyon  
But by her prayer / and humylyte  
Makynge for them / to our lorde intercessyon  
They were restaured / to helthe and saluacyon  
All by the meryte / of this byrgyn pure  
A synguler refuge / bnto euery creature.

To the dombe was gyuen / speche and language  
To blynde theyr syght / to dese theyr herynge  
To halte and lame people / helthe in euery aege  
By deuyne grace / and her ghostly lyuyng  
The people approchynge / nygh to her in dwellynge  
By callynge to her / in the name of Ihesu  
Had theyr petycyon / by her synguler vertu.

Some other that were / fully possessed



With wycked spyrytes / berynge the mynde  
Or with sekenes incurable / myserably greued  
By her dayly prayer / aboue course of kynde  
Of theyr dysleases / they shulde remedy fynde  
And from her departe / in soule with gladnesse  
Whiche to her came / soz in peyne and wretchednes.

**C** How saynt Werburge gaue knowledge to her systers  
of her departure & how she ordered i bertue her sayd mo  
nasteryes afore her dethe. Ca.xxvii.

**T** His blessed abbesse / and vertuouse floure  
The well of clemmes / and humplyte  
Called to mynde / the wordes of our sauour  
Reherled by Mathewe / in his euangely  
The byctory all crowne / of eterne glory  
Is gyuen to them / that be redy eche houre  
Wysely attendynge / whan they be sende fore.

This terte was euer / in her memoryall  
Prompte alway redy / as a true spouses  
To wayte on her spouse / whan he wyll call  
Her lampe replete / with oyle of mekenes  
Synguler gyftes / she had of chrystes goodnes  
Inspyred with the spyryte / of prophecy  
Secrete thynges to come / knowynge therby.

She knewe the season / was hastely comynge  
Of her departure / fro this lyfe mortall  
Wherefore she ordred / sadly euery thyng  
Within her monasteryes / and charges spyrytuall  
Apytyng her couent / with her presence personall



Gaue knowlege to them / that soone and hastely  
She shulde departe / frome this lyfe transytory.

Afore her were called / the systers of yche place  
And were apoynted / who shulde succede  
After to be gouernour / ruler / and abbesse  
To the pleasure of god / and theyr ghostly mede  
Specyally commendynge / bertue as we rede  
What meryte they shall haue / of god almyghty  
In spyrytuall cures / that done well theyr duty.

All other offycers / within eche monastery  
Were assygned by Werburge / theyr presydent  
And vnder obedyence / charged full depely  
Theyr offyce to execute / bertue to augment  
For the synguler profyte / of all the couent  
She gaue to yche place / landes and possessyon  
Suffyciently to serue / all the congregacyon.

When she had ordeyned / eche place in charyte  
Dyschargynge her conscyence / chargynge them all  
To obserue relygion / with perfyte humylyte  
After her exemple / and doctryne pryncypall  
She had perfyte knowlege / by grace supernaturall  
Her body shulde rest / in the place of Hamburgens  
After her departure / by deuyne prouydens.

Wherefore she commaunded / the couent of Hamburg  
Wysely to attende / with all theyr dyligence  
Upon the ende / of her lyfe transytory  
Wheresoeuer it be / to come with benyuolence  
And incontynent take / her body with reuerence

And brynge it shortly / vnto theſe monaſtery  
There to be tūmplate / after her deſybery.

As it pleaſeth our lorde / and celeſtyall ſufferayne  
To ſende to his ſeruaunte / his byſytacyon  
The day was apoynted / the houre incertayne  
Of her departure / frome worldly beſacyon  
The meſſanger of dethe / the ende of trybulacyon  
Oppreſſed this lady / moost worthy fame  
Ryght at her monaſtery / nomynat Trentame.

She thanked her maker / ſayenge day and nyght  
Well come be the byſytacyon / of god almyghty  
She called her ſyſters / preſent afore her ſyght  
Her entente reherſynge / to them tenderly  
Deſyrynge all them / to ſolowe dyligently  
The lawes of god / with honour and reuerence  
And to her counſeyll / to gyue fully credence.

Sayenge dere byloued ſyſters / in our ſauour  
O ſpyrytuall chyldren / my derlynges moost dere  
Whiche haue refuſed / all worldly honour  
To ſerue our lorde / with herte and mynde clere  
Suffer no ſynne / in your ſoule to apere  
But waſſhe it away / by bytter contrycyon  
With prayer penaunce / and true confeſſyon.

And truſt ye well your true obedyence  
your chaſt lyuynge / and wylfull pouerte  
your dayly prayers / bygyls / and abſtynence  
That ye haue obſerued / her vnder me  
Shalbe recompensd / a thouſande folde trule



When ye shalbe taken / fro this lyfe transytory  
your rewarde shalbe / with immortall glory.

As for my dethe / whiche approaches nere  
I drede nothyng / tho nature ferefull be  
I knowe for certayne / who departeth well here  
Is newe borne agayne / to Joye and felycyte  
The chrysten man hath / a threfolde natyure  
Fyrst of his parentes / by cours of nature  
Borne to many troubles / and sorowes sure.

By the seconde byrthe / whiche is more excellent  
At fonte of baptyſm / we haue regeneracyon  
By fayth professed / to god omnyppotent  
And made the chylde / of ghostly saluacyon  
To auoyde by grace / all wyched temptacyon  
To be inherytours / of Joy perpetuall  
Folowynge the counseyl / of holy chyrche withall.

The thyrde byrthe / moost ferefull and to be dredde  
Is when the soule / departeth fro the body  
To payne or blyſſe / and leues the corps dedde  
To tourne agayne to erthe / to wast and putryfy  
In this thyrde byrthe / by callynge aserres for mercy  
Our soule shall lyue in blyſſe / euerlastynge  
Crowned with vyctory / for our chaste lyuynge.

The swete byrde closed / in a cage a longe season  
Gladly entendeth / to fly at lyberte  
The prysoner fettered / and cast in depe dongeon  
Euer supposes / to be rydde frome captiuyte  
The soule of mankynde / moost dygne of dute



Naturally desyrezeth / proued by reason  
To be delyuered / frome bodyly pryson.

**T** Of y<sup>e</sup> ghosly exortacyon saynt Werburge made to her  
systers in her sekenesse / and how deuoutely she receyued  
y<sup>e</sup> sacramētes of holy chyrche byfore her deth. Ca. xlviii.

**T** He day knowen / to her by reuelacyon  
Of her departure / by sygnes euydent  
She sende for all / the hole congregacyon  
And in presence / of all her holy couent  
She called for the blessed sacrament  
To whome she sayd / with wordes expresse  
With wepyng teeres / and great mekenesse.

Well come my lorde / well come my kyng  
Well come my sufferayne / and sauour  
Well come my conforte / and ioy euerlastyng  
My trust / my treasure / my helpe and socour  
Well come my maker / and my redemptour  
The sone of god / moost in maieste  
Withouten begynnynge / and endeles shalbe.

I beleue that thou / for all mankynde  
Frome heuen descended / of thy charyte  
And was incarnate / scripture dothe mynde  
In the byrgynall wombe / of blessed marpe  
And suffered dethe / to make vs all fre  
Descended to hell / roose the thyrde day  
Ascended to heuen / and our raunson dyd pay.

And I knowlege to the / with pure entent

On Shorptthurday / after thy passyon  
Thy moost blessed body / in sacrament  
Thou gaue to vs / for our communyon  
To be our defence / and ghostly turycon  
Now present here / in forme of breed  
To Judge mankynde / bothe quicke and deed.

O sufferayne sauyour / replete with grace  
I the beseeche / haue pyte vpon me  
And in my soule / make a dwellynge place  
Erpulce all byce / synne and mysery  
Defende my soule / frome our aduersary  
Saue and protecte me / from peynes infernall  
And brynge thugh thy mercy / to ioye perpetuall

Thus with reuerence / and great humylyte  
She receyued / the blessed sacrament  
The seconde persone / in trynyte  
In perfyte fayth / hope / and loue feruent  
With great contricyon / as it was apparent  
Her herte lyfte vp / towarde heuen on hye  
Abydyng the wyll / of god almyghty.

She exorted / her systers euerychone  
That were there present / in companye  
Desyrynge them all / with supplicacyon  
To remembre her / sayenge with humylyte  
My systers in god / now knowe may ye  
My dayes ben ferre past / comynge is the houre  
Wherefore I betake you / fyrst to our sauyour.

Prayenge you tenderly / for the loue of me  
Werburge.

h.i.



In deuynе seruyce / loke ye contynue  
Obserynge pacyence / mekenes / and chastyte  
Encresynge in relygyon / by the grace of Ihesu  
Who so perceuers / in herte and mynde true  
Under obedyence / to the extreme day  
Is sure to be saued / scrypture so doth say.

Also remembre / that all worldly royalte  
Honour / ryches / pleasure / possessyon  
If ye consyder / are but a banpte  
Nothyng assured / to trust therupon  
Wherefore dyspose you / to vertue alon  
Whyle ye endure / in this lyfe mortall  
Tyll that ye come / to Joy perpetuall.

Secondly she sayd / sisters I you pray  
Kept well the order / of perfyte charyte  
Neuer declynyng / fro it by no way  
As ye haue taken / exemple of me  
Iche loue other / and worshyp in theyr degre  
So that no murmure / nor dysstylulacyon  
Be founde amonge / this holy congregacyon.

Be euer lowly / humble / and obedyent  
With due reuerence / worshyp and honoure  
Folowe the mynde / of your presydent  
Unto your heed / and ghostly gouernoure  
Kepe well chastyte / that precyous floure  
So that no thought / of sensualityte  
Corrupte your mynde / to breke byrgynpte.

Se that ye vse / dyscrete temperaunce



Abstenynge frome bayne superfluyte  
Se that amonge you / be founde no baryaunce  
Kepe well the degrees / of humylyte  
These and many other / exemples of charyte  
She taught her couent / of synguler deuocyon  
How they shulde optayne / to hye perfeccyon.

Thyrdly she prayed / sayenge with mynde dyligent  
O blessed sauyour / I desyre the  
Saue and defende / my hole couent  
And theyr monasteryes / of thy great pyte  
Frome peryll of peryshynge / and frome enmyte  
That all the subiectes / of our congregacyon  
May well obserue / theyr holy professyon.

And graunt me swete lord / throwe thy goodnes  
Who so in thy name / bypon me dothe call  
In langour / mysery / in peyne / or sekenes  
Also women with chylde / in peynes thrall  
May haue remedy / and helpe specyall  
And people in pryson / halte / blynde / and lame  
By me may magnify / thy glorious name.

Than she requyred / with humylyte  
The spyrytuall sufferage / of holy vnccyon  
Her soule to conforthe / frome all aduersyte  
She toke her leue / and kyssed them ycheon  
Alas what herte / myght she we the lamentacyon  
The wepyng / waylynge / and wofull heurnes  
At the departure / of theyr swete maystres.

**C** Of the departure of saynt Werburge vnto heuē at the  
Werburge. h.ii.

abbay of Trentam / fro this myserable lyfe / & what lamentacyon her sisters made for her dethe. Ca.xxix.

**I**n all her infyrmte / peyne and busynesse  
She bled prayer / and medytacyon  
Callynge for mercy / by interyor mekenesse  
With wepyng eyes / and great lamentacyon  
Remembryng in herte / our lordes passyon  
Commendynge her couent / vnto our sauour  
To be theyr defence / ayde / and protectour.

The peynes encreased / of her infyrmte  
The panges doubled / her peyne to augment  
Nature decayed / vnto such debylte  
That the sygnes of dethe / appered euydent  
The houre approached / after all Iudgment  
Wherefore all thynges / were redy preparate  
As was conuenient / for so noble a state.

Her spouse Ihesus / hauynge pyte and cure  
Upon his spouses / in extreme dystresse  
Wolde not suffer her peyne / longer endure  
But sende his angels / with great lyghtnesse  
To comforte his seruaunt / in peyne and sekenesse  
To dyssolue her wo / and great penalte  
And bynge by her soule / to eterne felycyte.

There derknes was tournd / all vnto lyght  
Langour and trouble / vnto prosperyte  
The day was gouernour / ouer the nyght  
When that she passed / this lyfe transytory  
Bondage and thraldome / were brought to lyberte  
The tyme of Ioye / and euerlastyng pleasure



Was appoehynge to Werburge / euer to endure.

A multytude of angelles / Gynnyng moost clere  
Were redy to gyde / with humble reuerence  
The soule of Werburge / as truly dyd apere  
And brought it to blys / vnto the hye presence  
Of almyghty god / moost of magnyfycence  
Clerely releashed / frome pepnes of purgatory  
To be rewarded / with euerlastyng glozy.

This blessed byrgyn / glorious and pure  
In stedfast fayth / hope / loue / and charyte  
The thynde day of february / ye may be sure  
Expyred frome this lyfe / caduce and transytory  
To eterne blyss / coronate with vitory  
Chaungynge her lyfe / myserable and thral  
For infynyte ioye / and glozy eternall.

With moche honour / these spyrytuall mynysters  
Conueyed the soule / aboue the firmament  
Passynge the seuen planettes / and all the sterres  
Vnto the presence / of god omnyppotent  
Syngynge full swetely / theyr songes equybalent  
Of pleasaunt armony / of conforste and blys  
Salutynge her mekely / with wordes reuerent  
Veni dilecta : veni coronabiris.

The thre Jerarcheses / were redy present  
With heuenly melody / to receyue this monyall  
The quere of byrgyns / mette her incontynent  
With great solemnyte / and processyon royall  
Presentynge her soule / with myrthes angelycall  
To Ihesu her spouse / to whome he sayd truly  
Werburge.

Well come dere doughter / to blyffe celestyall  
Intra in gaudium : domui tui.

In meane tyme and space / this venerable body  
(The soule departed) lay whyte / streyght and colde  
Semyng as on slepe / she had ben verely  
With swete odours fragrant / passynge manyfolde  
All spyes and herbes / in erth may be tolde  
The place was so pleasaunt / full of delyce  
Lyke as it had ben / an erthly paradyce.

This forsayd venerable congregacyon  
With wepyng teeres / and syghes lamentable  
Washed the swete body / after the olde custome  
And dressed the corps / with clothes honorable  
Prepared all necessaryes / pleasaunt and commendable  
To churche she was brought / solemply in syght  
With feruent deuocyon / to be watched all nyght.

And as they watched / with due mynystracyon  
Ouer the sayd corps / deuoutly prayenge  
They made great mournynge / and lamentacyon  
Euerychone to other / for her departynge  
Alas they all sayd / with wofull waylynge  
Our solace / our helthe / is clere gone away  
Alas for sorowe / what shall we now say.

The sterre of our conforste / is extyncte clere  
The lanturne of our lyght / is taken vs fro  
The floure of chastyte / is layd vpon a bere  
The myrrour of mekenes / now lyeth full loo  
The treasure of relygyon / from us now is ago  
Our sorowe encreased / wretchednes / and misery



Syrth thou arte departed / alas what remedy :

Our hertes ben plunged / in great wo and peyne  
Our myndes are medled / with heuy langour  
How shulde we now rest / frome moynynge certayne  
Beholdynge now deed / whylom our protectour  
Swete lady thou art gone / frome vs for euermore  
Our deedly sorowe / replete with bytternes  
For waylynge and wepyng / can neuer ceas.

With herte mynde and boyce / to the we do call  
O blessed Werburge / our moost dere maystres  
O sufferayne lady / and ruler of vs all  
Why haste thou vs lefte / in suche heuynesse  
If thy wyll had ben / it is knowen expresse  
Thou myght haue taryed / with vs by petycyon  
Alas remedyleffe / is our lamentacyon

Frome vs thou arte taken / and gone is our solace  
The myrrour of bertue / is deed now with the  
The tryed stock of truth / and the grounde of grace  
Is pyteously decayed / our hope and sufferaynte  
O blessed sauyour / vpon vs haue pyte  
Sende vs our conforste / by thy great myght agayne  
As thou haste reysed many / from dethe to lyfe certayne.

O dredefull dethe / cruell enemy to nature  
With dolefull heuynes / on the we may complayne  
Takyng our heed frome vs / to our great dysconfyture  
Hath brought vs to thraldome / wofulnes and peyne  
Nothyr kynge ne emperour / thy fauour may optayne  
But he must departe / arrested with thy launce.

Chanke we god of all / for it is his pleasaunce.

**H**ow the hamburgenses toke the blessed body of Werburge frome Trentam by myracle & brought it to Ham-bury / & of y<sup>e</sup> burpall of werburge / & of manyfolde myra-cles shewed for her merytes .ix. yere after her trāslacyon.  
Ca. xxx.

**T**his glorpyous byrgyn / and moost blessed abbace  
Departed from this lyfe / caduce and transytory  
(As afore is sayd) the yere and tyme of grace  
Almoost seuen hundreth / the thyrde day of february  
To celestyall blyss / and infynyte glory  
Her subiectes oppressed / with wylfull pensyueneſſe  
With great trybulacyon / care and heuynesse.

But where werburge gaue / in commaundymēt  
To bury her corps / at place of Hambury  
As was the wyl / of our lorde omnytpotent  
Her subiectes of Trentam / whiche had her body  
Purposed her wyl / and entent to deny  
Prepared to kepe / the corps by stronge hande  
With them to remayne / as ye shall vnderstande.

The sayd people of Trentam / watched full dyligent  
Her corps fulfyllinge / the obsequyes funerall  
Entendynge to auoyde / and frustrate her testament  
Gate a great company / by power Marcyall  
Closed fast theyr doores / and gates one and all  
Made sure yche place / by theyr prouydens  
For to kepe the corps / excludynge Chamburgens.

But as Salomon sayth / sentencyously



There may be no counseyll / power ne prudence  
Wysedome of man / nor naturall polycy  
To derogate or chaunge / deuyne sentence  
Proued euer day / by true experyence  
Tho mankynde prepose / his mynde to fulfyll  
yet god dysposeth / all thyng at his wyll.

And as they watched / the same sayd nyght  
Mooost busily / to execute they wyll and entent  
By deuyne prouydence / passyng mannes myght  
Sodeynly on slepe / was all that couent  
Theyr company and mynysters / that were there lent  
Hauyng no power / for to waken doubtles  
God so prouyded / for theyr great maystres.

Than shortly resembled / vnto that sayd place  
The people of Hamburgens / a great company  
With the mynysters of god / people full of grace  
And anone by the wyll / of our lorde almyghty  
The lockes and the barres / of that sayd monastery  
fell downe to the grounde / by power supernall  
Without mannes hande / that enter they myght all.

Whiche myracle proued / the people of Hambury  
Entred Trentam abbay / with mynde reuerent  
And founde there on slepe / all the other company  
Man / woman / and chylde / all that were present  
They kneeled all downe / and worshypped the sacrament  
Praytynge our maker / of theyr good spede  
Theyr specyall socour / euer at theyr nede.

Her blessed body / from Trentam they dyd take  
Merburge. l.i.

Gladly departynge / out of the monastery  
Nothor man nor woman / had power to wake  
Tyll they were passed / all greuous Jeopardy  
Magnifyenge our lorde / of his grace deuoutly  
Solemply syngyng their songes celestiaall  
With infinite gladnes / and comfort spirituall.

After all this done / this holy congregacion  
With reuerence / honour / and solempnite  
With wepyngteariss / for pure affection  
With lamentable songes / masse and dirige  
Buried the corpes / of this blessed ladie  
Right in the chauncell / of the sayd abbay  
There bodily to rest / as her wyll was alway.

All obsequies ended / therto belongynge  
As was agreable for suche a president  
The systers departed / with clamour and mournynge  
Plonged in heuynes / and to their celles went  
To wepe and wayle secretly / their hartis to content  
Cryng alas alas / nowe buried haue we  
The exemple of vertu / mekenes / and chastite.

And as the history of her lyfe / doth expresse  
In a booke nominat / the thrid Passionary  
After the buriaall of this patronesse  
The place was decorat / with myracles many  
Manifest to the people / of euery progeny  
Howe god almyghty of his speciall grace  
Hath done for his seruant / in short tyme and space.

For many people greued with infirmite



Dolorous of hert / and interiour tribulacion  
Heuynes of mynde / or other penalite  
To her graue resortyng / with feruent deuocion  
Seking for remedy / with great contricion  
Anon by her prayer / vnto our sauour  
They were released from payne and langour.

Also by her merite suffrage and petition  
Euery humble creature had helpe and succour  
To distract persons / was yelded reason  
Wicked spirites expulsed . were that same hour  
Impotent and feble to helth she dyd restour  
Halt and lame had passage / the blynde had pfect syght  
The dombe had speche / the desse herynge ryght.

Women with childe / beyng in great ieopardy  
Namely in trauelyng / greued with wo and payne  
When they myght nat come / sendyng to her oratorye  
Makynge true oblacion / restaured were certayne  
To helth and prosperite / from wo deliuered playne  
And if they obteyned a relique from the place  
The mother and childe / by it founde speciall grace.

The deuout pilgrym / the perfit maryner  
The true laborer / the marchant with richesse  
The carefull pore man / the peynfull prisioner  
Were sondry tymes deliuered from wo and distresse  
Men / women / child / sekynge with mekenes  
This glorious virgyn / with humble supplicacion  
Founde soone remedie / helpe and consolacion.

¶ A litle breue rehersall of her lyfe / and howe for her  
Werburge. l.ii.

myracles shewed y<sup>e</sup> couent of Hambury purposed to tra  
slate her body / by the helpe of Mercyens. Ca. xxxi.

**T**His glorious lady / and gemme of holynesse  
Of fyue myghty kynges / descended lynyally  
A prynces / an enherytryce / replete with mekenes  
Refused all pleasures / pompe / and bayne glory  
Entred relygyon / professed at Ely  
A spectacle of bertue / dwellynge in that place  
And a floure of chastyte / electe by synguler grace.

Her honorable vncl / kyng Ethelede  
Consyderynge her bertue / and hye deuocyon  
Made her gouernour / for ghostly helthe and mede  
Duer all the monasteryes / within his regyon  
For the sure encresement / of perfyte relygyon  
Foure of these monasteryes / we haue in memory  
As Wedon / Trentam / Kepton / and Hambury.

When she was ruler / and chiefe presydent  
Of these sayd places / vnder god almyghty  
Than bertue and goodnes / dayly dyd augment  
By heuenly grace / to the soule helthe of many  
And by her exemple / and doctryne ghostly  
Kynges / lordes / barons / refusynge theyr royalte  
Entred relygyon / with great humylyte.

Her lyfe and doctryne / agreed bothe in one  
Proued in effecte / by specyall gyftes of grace  
Many she conuerted / vnto contemplacyon  
To prayer and penaunce / whyle they had here space  
Her couent and subiectes / within euery place  
By her excellent bertue / and hye dyscrecyon



Were gratioſly governed / for theyr ſaluacion.

Her dwellynge was moſt at the place of Medon  
Where many myracles were ſhewed openly  
And at Trentam abbay / of her foundation  
From payne ſhe departed to eternall glory  
After her entent was buried at Hambury  
Of whom it may be ſayd / here lyeth nowe preſent  
A princeſſe / a virgin / a nonne / and a preſident.

The deuout couent of her congregacion  
Whiche hath long wayled / with ſorrowfull payne  
Nowe haue great cauſe to make conſolacion  
And gyue due honour to our lord and ſufferayne  
Knowynge that Werburge / in blyſſe is nowe certayne  
For them all dayly a true mediatrice  
In the heuynly trone / afore the hie Juſtice.

Our ſauour Jeſus / graunter of all goodnes  
Conſydering the mekenes / and pure virginite  
Of Werburge his ſpouſe / and proued holynes  
By ſpeciall grace / preſerued her body  
To his laude and honour / his name to magnifye  
Both hole and ſounde / from naturall reſolucion  
As her ſoule was clere from vice and corruption.

This immaculat mayde / ſhewyng more bryght  
Than radiant phebus in the triumphant trone  
With the quere of virgins / prayſeth day and nyght  
The bleſſed trinite with due adoration  
Of perpetuall pleaſure hauyng the fruition  
A ſingular interceſſour for her ſeruauntes all  
Werburge. l.iii.

That here in erth mekely to her wyll call

And though her body do rest nowe in graue  
yet notable signes continually be done  
Some warned in their slepe comfort to haue  
By visityng her place / callynge her vpon  
With contrite hert makynge true oblacion.  
Whiche thyng continued by space of .ix. yere  
With meruailous myracles euident and clere

The couent consyderynge suche great company  
from diuers partes / resortynge to theyr place  
In pylgrimage to Werburge / for helpe and remedy  
Entended to translate this glorious abbasse  
To exalte her body replet with great grace  
To her great honour / comfort to eche creature  
Pite that suche a relique shulde lye in sepulture

To the prayes and honour of god omnipotent  
And of saint Werburge laude and reuerence  
The couent and the people by one assent  
Desired Coelrede than kynge of merciens  
For aide in this case / helpe and diligence  
(Whiche thyng graunted) the day appointed was  
The clergy and the comons reioised with solace

**C** Of the solempne transacion of this glorious virgyn  
saint Werburge / and of the great myracles done at the  
sayd season by the myght of god and merite of this gra-  
cious lady.

Cap. xxxii.

At the day appoynted of her transacion



Kynge Coelred and his counsell were redy present  
With bysshops and the clergy men of deuocion  
Her sisters and subiettes a religious couent  
The comon people from eche place thider went  
With great gladnes / the hole for pleasure goffly  
The seke and impotent for helth and remedy

The bysshops and clergy stode bpon one parte  
Of her holy graue / and her sisters echone  
Syngynge and praylynge the blessed trinite  
The kyng and his connsell with great deuocion  
Stode on the other parte in contemplacion  
The graue was opened eleuat was the chest  
Wherin her holy corps. ix. yere fully dyd rest

Whan this sayd monument discovered was  
Suche a suauite and fragrant odoure  
Ascended from the corps by singular grace  
Passyng all worldly swetnes and sauour  
That all there present that day and hour  
Supposed they had ben / in the felicity  
Of erthely paradise / without ambiguite.

And as eche man thaught by naturall reason  
Nothyng shulde remayn of that blessed body  
But the bare boones / all els to resolucion  
The couerture remoued by the sayd clergy  
The corps hole and sounde was funde berely  
Apperyng to them / on slepe as she had ben  
Nothyng depaired / that ther coude be seen.

Her besture appered hole clere and white  
Merburge.

Liiii.

No parte consumed / for all the longe space  
Fragrant in odoure / repleit with delite  
As at the fyrst season whan she buried was  
But whan discouered was her swete face  
Beautye appered more white than the lile  
Mirt with rose colour / moost faire for to se

Her louely countenannce / so comly to beholde  
And her swete fisnomy / with fairenes decorat  
As freshely apparant / moost pleasant to be tolde  
As at the fyrst day / whan she was tumulat  
No doubt therof / for she with synne nat maculat  
Uysng all her lyfe in clenness and virginite  
From bodily corruption / by grace must saued be.

The clergy yet serchyng more diligently  
Her precious body / and interiour vesture  
Elevat the corps full reuerently  
With moche worchip honour and cure  
Founde nothyng perished in shap nor figure  
For all the long space tyme and contynuaunce  
She lay in sepulture by diuine ordynaunce.

Whiche famous myracle / notified so clere  
The clergy with her systers in ioy and honour  
The kyng and his counsell all therat present were  
With voice melodious made a great clamour  
Praysyng and magnifyng our blessed sauour  
With celestiaall songes / and hymnes full of blys  
Deuoutly reherisyng / with all their deuour  
Mirabilis deus in sanctis suis.



With that the comon rude people euerychone  
In the sayd church yarde standyng without  
Heryng the clergy syng with suche deuotion  
Towarde heuen they cried / and busely dyd shout  
The space of .iii. houres / or nere there about  
Worshippyng our lorde / with voice shrill and loude  
In hert wyl and mynde / as well as they coude.

After all this done / her blessed body  
Was washed and reclothed with vesture precious  
By the sayd couent of the place of Hambury  
The bysshops were reuested in pontificalibus  
And all the clergy syngyng with voice melodious  
Kneled all downe and gaue due reuerence  
Honour and worship to her corporall presence.

Thus they resceyued with perfit humilite  
This sacrat relique hole and substanciall  
And layd it in a shryne with great solempnite  
Enownded with riches sumptuous and roiall  
Prepared by the kyng / and ordeyned inspeciall  
Entendyng that this relique and gossly treasure  
Perpetually with them shulde remayne and endure

People oppressed with greuous infirmite  
Distract persons / halt blynde and lame  
Resortynge to her shryne with humilite  
Shortly were cured by callynge of her name  
Impotent creatures (the legende sayth the same)  
Touchyng her tumb / were cured from payne  
Whiche tumb remayneth at Hambury certayne

After she was translate / knowen it is well  
The clergy to procession / went after to mas  
Honoryng and praylyng / the kyng of Israell  
And blessed Werburge / with moche solace  
When diuine seruice duely ended was  
The bisschops gaue theyr holy benedictions  
The people departed glad to their mansions

This holy sayd fest of her translacon  
Was ordeyned and celebrate with solemnite  
As sayeth Ranulphus in his policroicon  
About the yere of grace .vii. hundreth and .viii. sothle  
The .xi. kalendas of the moneth Julii  
Regnyng in mercelande the said kyng Coelrede  
Chan bysshop of Lichefeld was Hedda / as we rede

Howe the body of saynt Werburge contynued hole /  
and substanciall at Hambury after the translacon by the  
space of two hundreth yeres / tyll the danes were comon  
to this lande / or it felle and was resolued vnto powder  
The .xxxiii. Chapitre.

This rutilant gemme and specious floure  
Hole and substanciall remayned at Hambury  
Two hundreth yeres in beaute and colour  
By singular grace / and angelicall custodye  
Tyll the danes were comon of malice and misery  
Of ire and myschief / as we vnderstande  
We meane the comyng of pagans to this lande

Whiche danes by sufferance and dispensacion



Of almyghty god / for synne and iniquite  
Punyshted vnpyteously all this region  
With a wofull plage of great crudelite  
The sharpe swerde of deth / haupnge no pite  
Spared no creature / prest nor religious  
Long tyme duryng in their malice odious

Than this bitall glebe by diuine ordinaunce  
Voluntary permytted naturall resolution  
Lest the cruell gentils / and wiked myscreauntes  
With pollute handes full of corrupcion  
Shulde touche her body / by indignation  
Whiche pagans were enemyes to our lorde Jesu  
Rebels to holy churche vnfeithfull and vntrue

Howe be it the power of our swete sauour  
Myght haue continued the body of his syruant  
All that longe season in worshyp and honour  
As he preserued of his grace abundaunt  
Many sayntes of this realme hole freshe and bernant  
iiii. hundreth yeres agon / to this present day  
And like so to endure / hole and clere alway.

Sothely to conside / our lorde omnipotent  
Glorious in his sayntes / scripture doth specifie  
Of his diuine prouidence / pleasure and intent  
Some haue resolved / for the greater glorie  
Of their resurrection for the tyme truly  
Some other to continue without corrupcion  
To the true example of his promission

Many holy martyrs / for Christ haue byn slayne

The hie prestis of god murdered cruelly  
Some with wyld beasts deuoured in certayne  
Some cast in fiers on cooles to broyle and fry  
Upon many other byrdes fedyng openly  
Of whom the prophet clerely doth reherce  
The more peyne here and wo / the more glory doubtles.

The glorious martyr Stephan (as is red)  
In this present lyfe dyd myracles many  
Neuertherles / he raised no people that were deed  
But after the resoluyng of his blessed body  
He raised deed men to lyfe agayne truely  
That the great power of lyfe myght sprynge  
From iniurie of deth / by our heuen kynge.

Great was the respect of diuine grace  
In the body of Werburge / without resolution  
Shewed by her myracles / for mannes helth and solace  
But greatt was the hope of the eterne reuouacion  
In her body resolved to naturall consumption  
Whiche for her merites to this present day  
Helpeth all her seruauntes that to her wyll praye

Therefore worshyp we with singular deuocion  
The holy luyng of this virgin gracious  
For why / all the halowynge of her conuersacion  
Belongeth to the honour of our lorde Iesus  
Whiche of his grace hath made her so glorious  
And graunteth his mercy / and of synne remysion  
To all them / for whom / she maketh intercession.

Blessed pure virgin / moines and abbasse



O venerable werburge / mekely we the pray  
 Make thou supplicacyon / to the graunter of grace  
 After this lyfe present / that all we may  
 Come to heuen blyſſe / whiche laſteth for ay  
 There to beholde / the glorious trynitye  
 To whom be laude / worſhpy / honour / & endles gloze.

**C** The table of the ſeconde boke of y<sup>e</sup> glo-  
 rious byrgyn ſaynt Werburge.



If the comynge to this lande of paganes / and  
 of the trouble of this lande / and how y<sup>e</sup> kynge  
 of Mercyens for drede departed out of this  
 lande / and how longe ſaynt Werburge con-  
 tynued incorrupte and hole at the abbay of  
 Hambury. Ca.i.

**C** How the people of Hambury brought the ſhyne to  
 Cheſter / and of the ſolempne receyvinge of it / by all the  
 inhabytauntes of the countre. Ca.ii.

**C** A lytell deſcrypcyon of the fundacyon of Cheſter / and  
 of y<sup>e</sup> abbay churche within the ſayd cytee / where the holy  
 ſhyne remayneth. Ca.iii.

**C** A breue rehertall / of the fyrſt fundacyon of the myn-  
 ſter of Cherſter / & of the inſtytucyon of ſeculer chanons /  
 in the tyme of kynge Edward ſenior. Ca.iiii.

**C** Of the notable myracle of ſaynt Werburge in y<sup>e</sup> tyme  
 of chanons / and fyrſt how ſhe ſaued Cheſter from the de-  
 ſtruccyon of Walſhe men. Ca.v.

**C** Howe saynte Werburge cured and healed a woman  
the tymes whiche was halt and lame to helthe and pro-  
sperite agayne. Cap.vi.

**C** Howe saynt Werburge saued and defended Chester  
from innumerable barbarik nacions purposynge to de-  
stroye and spoyle the same cite vtterly. Cap.vii.

**C** Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent fruyte to a  
barayne Woman by synguler praper made vnto her.  
Cap.viii.

**C** Howe a woman with childe by peyne brought out of  
her mynde & reason by saynt Werburge was restaured  
to prosperite and helthe agayne. Cap.ix.

**C** Of a nother woman vnlaufully wurkyng was made  
blynde and sore punysshed / and by saint Werburge was  
restored to syght agayne. Cap.x.

**C** Howe saint Werburge restored to helth & prosperite  
vi. lame & halt persons by singular grace. Ca.xi.

**C** Of a yonge man vnryghtfully hanged was thies de-  
lyuered from deth by saynt Werburge to helth and pro-  
sperite. Cap.xii.

**C** Howe at the maner of Aptō saynt Werburge refray-  
ned wilde horses from distruction of her cornes. ca.xiii.

**C** Of a chano of Chester hauryng his leg brokē was re-  
stored to helth by saint Werburge his prones. Ca.xiiii.



¶ A breue rehersall of certayne kyngis / and  
howe kyng Edgar came to Chester / also howe erle Le-  
ofrice repared diuers churches. Ca.xv.

¶ Of the comyng of Willjam cōquerour to this lande /  
& howe Lupe was fonder of Chester monastery. ca.xvi.

¶ Howe saint Werburge taught her monke to kepe pa-  
cience for the greater merite and glori to come. ca.xvii.

¶ Howe sandes rose vp within the salt see ayenst Hil-  
burghde by saint Werburge at the peticion of William  
constable of Chestre. Ca.xviii.

¶ Howe Matild / countesse of Chestre cōsellynge her  
husband agaynst the monasterie was drowned at Bart  
flowe with many other mo. Cap.xix.

¶ Howe a great fire like to destroye all Chestre by my-  
racle ceased whan the holy thyrne was borne about the  
towne by the monkes. Ca.xx.

¶ A breue rehersall of the myracles of saynt Werburge  
after her translatiō to Chestre. Ca.xxi.

¶ A charitable mocio / cōsel / & desire to al thynhabitātz  
win the cōntie palatin of Chest for y<sup>e</sup> monastori. ca.xxii.

¶ A litle orison or prayer to y<sup>e</sup> blessed virgin saint Wer-  
burge by the translatour of this worke. Ca.xxiii.

¶ A short conclusion of this litle worke to the reders by  
the translatour. Ca.xxiiii.

**T**he prologe of the translatour of this lytell  
treatyse in the seconde boke.

**N**ow whan we consyder / with mynde dyligent  
The merueylous maners / a synguler condycion  
Of the comyn people / symple and neclygent  
Whiche without lytterature / and good informacyon  
Ben lyke to Brute beestes / as in comparyson  
Rude / wyld / and boystous / by a prouerbe certan  
Good maners and conynge / maken a man.

Saynt Paule sayth / shewynge to the Romans  
How all thyng wyten / in holy scripture  
Is wyten for our doctryne / and ghostly ordynans  
For our great conforste / and endeles pleasure  
All thyng is knowen playnly / by lytterature  
Morall vertues / be noted by it full playne  
Frome byce and neclygence / to abstayne certayne.

What were mankynde / without lytterature  
Full lytell worthy / blynded by ignoraunce  
The way to heuen / it declareth ryght sure  
Through perfyte lerynge / and good perseueraunce  
By it we may be taught / for to do penaunce  
Whan we transgresse / our lordes commaundment  
It is a swete cordyall / for mannes entent.

How shulde the seven / scyences lyberall  
Haue ben preserued / vnto this day  
The wyldome / of the phylosophers all  
But alone by lernynge / it is no nay  
The notable actes / of our fathers I say



(yf litterature were nat) myght nat nowe be tolde  
Nor auncient histories and cronycles olde

The lawe of ciuile / and of holy canon  
By study be preferred with moche honour  
To execute iustice / and for due reformation  
The most blessed doctrine of our sauour  
The actis of the apostoles / with the doctours four  
Be preferred by wytyng / and put in memorie  
With the lyues of saintes many a noble storie

Of whiche histories we purpose speciall  
To speke of saint Werburge / vnder your protection  
Delaryng the ende of her lyfe historiall  
As we haue begon / and made playne mencion  
In the fyrst volume by breue compilacion  
There playnly descriuyng her liniall discens  
Of .iiii. myghty kyngdomes by true experience

Also we haue shewed in the sayd littel boke  
Her goodly maners / and vertuous disposicion  
Of her yonge age / who so lyst thereon to loke  
And howe her bretherne suffred martyrdome  
Of her fathers realme a litell descripcion  
Howe she was professed in the place of Ely  
Of her conuersacion within the sayd monastery

After for her vertue / howe she was made abbasse  
Of diuers monasteries flouryng in vertue  
And of the great miracles whiche there done was  
For her great charite / by the grace of Jesu  
Howe diuers of her kynrede dyd clerely exchewe  
Werburge. m.i.

All worldly pleasures and honours transitory  
Professynge obedience at the place of Ely

Also we haue shewed vnder your licence  
Of her departure from this lyfe mortall  
And of her sepulture at the place of Hamburgence  
The manyfolde myracles shewed by grace supernall  
The wofull lamentacion of her sisters all  
And howe after .ix. yere of her translacon  
By diuine ordinaunce miracles were done

We humble require you of your charite  
To this seconde abstract to graunt pardon  
Consyderynge we omytte whilom the historie  
And speke of cronicles / makynge a digression  
It is of no ignoraunce / nor presumption  
But to enlarge the mater and sentence  
To gladd the auditours / and moue their diligence

In our seconde boke expresse now we wyll we  
Under your licence and speciall tuicion  
Of this blessed birgin / flourynge in chastite  
Why and wherfore she came to Chestre towne  
Principally by miracle / and diuine prouision  
And howe for synne / vice / and wykednes  
Danes oppressed this lande with wretchednes

And howe she was receyued at Chestre citie  
Of the fyrst foundation of towne and the place  
Of the great myracles there shewed openlie  
To chanons and monkes / by singular grace  
Unto euery creature in extreme case



Howe Werburge deliuered the towne from enmite  
From dreadfull fire / and plages of miserye

Also encronicled foloweth here expresse  
A brefe compilacion of kyng Edwarde seniour  
Of kyng Ethelstan / the great worthynes  
Of humble kyng Ergar<sup>e</sup> regnyng as emperour  
Of his comyng to Chestre / of his great honour  
And howe Erle Leofrice repared of his charite  
The mynstre of Werburge gyuyng therto liberte

Of the seconde foundation of the sayd monastery  
From secular chanons to monkes religious  
Soone after the conquest sayth the historye  
By the erle of Chestre nominat Hug. Lupus  
With counsell and helpe of blessed Anselmus  
And of the great compass of the sayd abbay  
Enuired with walles myghty to assay

Howe Ric<sup>e</sup> erle of Chestre by myracle ryght  
Was preserued from daunger of Walshe-men  
And howe he was drowned about mydnyght  
Purposyng to distroye the monastery certen  
Celestiall signes were shewed to men and women  
To children and innocentes by singular grace  
Of blessed Werburge patronesse of the place

These miracles specified / and many other mo  
This virgin shewed within Chestre cite  
Whiche at this tyme we let ouer go  
Lest to the reders tedious it shulde be  
Almyghty god both one two and thre  
Werburge. m.ii.

Sende vs theyr grace to make a good ende  
Helpe lady Werburge this warke to amende

**O**f the comyng of cruell pagans to this lande / and  
howe saint Werburge longe lyenge hole and incorrupt  
at Hambury. than was resolved to powder. And howe  
the kynge of merciens was chased from his lade. Ca.i.

**A**fore the comyng of danes to this lande  
Merueilous signes were shewed in syght  
To conuert the people (as we bndestande)  
Sterres in the heuen shynyng full bryght  
Dyuerfly mouyng apperyng day and nyght  
Kennynge in the ayre dreadfull to beholde  
By longe continuaunce sayth the story olde

Flamyng fire / dragons in the ayre fleyng  
Thondryng / and layth / erth quake moost terrible  
With many other signes / as cometis blasynge  
Were seen in the ayre / to nature horrible  
Upon clothynge of people bloody dropes odible  
Euydently appered : the yere of grace  
vii. hundreth. lxxxvi in many a place

By whiche sayd signes wonderfull to se  
Two plages of pestilence folowed incontinent  
The first was great derthes hungre and pouerte  
The seconde was the greuous and sore punysshement  
Of the cruell danes cursed and fraudulent  
Whiche trouble began the .iiii. yere of Bicticus  
Kynge of west saxon / saith maister Alfridus.



The thyrde yere folowynge these signes in certen  
Danes and Norwaies enterprised this lande  
In the north partie . an hoost of armed men  
Whiche cruelly spoiled and destroyed holy Ilande  
With Tynmouth abbay / and all that myght be sonde  
Drowned and slewe the people euerychone  
Brenned churches / townes / spared no religion

In short tyme after the prenominate pagans  
At tamysmouth reentred this realme agayne  
Destroyed many cites by their myghty ordynaunce  
Oppressed London / Canturbury by power certayne  
The kynge of Mericiens to escape was fayne  
Kynge Adoulfus made the danes a batell  
To whiche kynge by grace the victorie befell

yt ye wyll consydre the cause wherfore and why  
Our lorde suffred pagans to punyshe this region  
The treuth was this : for synne specially  
For in the primatiue church / with great perfection  
Kynge / quenes / dukes entred religion  
Professed obedient chaste without propurte  
Vertue to encrease / true loue and charite

That tyme was iustice ministred with mercy  
True loue and amite founde in euery place  
Dissemblacion / pride and fals enuye  
Durst nat appere in halle nor in palace  
Extorcion pollynge opteyned no grace  
The commaundementes of god were obserued a ryght  
Charite was feruent / encreasynge day and nyght  
Merburge. m.iii.

By proces of tyme / as sayth myn auctour  
Through great possession / power / and liberte  
Vertue decreased in holy churche day and hour  
Holy religion decayed pitiousle  
Charite was colde / iustice and equite  
Extorcion disceyte were bled euery day  
Couetise / pride / lechery were ryued alway

Therefore our lorde of his great ryghtwisnes  
Suffred cruell people to entre this region  
A scourge to correct synne and wykednes  
Like a swarme of bees from dyuers nacion  
Whiche had no pite mercy nor compassion  
Danes Gotes Norwayes and scottes also  
Pictes and the wandeles with mony other mo

These foresayd fearfull and cruell nacions  
Most cruell pagans dyd great persecucion  
From the begynnyng of Adelwlf, kyng of westsaxons /  
Tyll the comynge of normans vnto this region  
The space enduryng by full computacion  
Two hundreth yeres complet .xxx. also  
With the swerde of bengeaunce fire and moche mo

The yere of our lorde .D.CCC. fyfty and one  
At Campsmouth arriued a great hoost of pagans  
With .iii. hundreth ships and .l. men of armes echone  
Whiche destroied Douer / and put the land to greuans  
Agayne Bernulphus the kyng of Mercians  
The paynymis preuayled / and caused his hoost to fle  
Whiche fortune enforced them more bolder to be.



But the yere of grace .D.CCC. five and sixtie  
The greattest noubre of the pagans all  
viii. kynges entred this realme by victorie  
Norwaies / gootes / Mandels / danes in especiall  
With many other nacions within in generall  
Kyng Hingwar and Hubba than came to this lande  
Whiche slewe saint Edmund kyng of Estenglande

The cruell paynymys and tyrauntes moost furious  
Repleit with malice / pride / and enuye  
Seruauntes to satan and ministres malicious  
Purposed to desolate holy churche wyckedly  
Brenned monasteries and spoiled vtterly  
Many churches chapels of a mortall hate  
Slewe religious men and nonnes dyd violate

The people were punysshed in euery place  
To olde sicke and impotent they shewed no mercy  
yonge soukyng children coude fynde no grace  
Wyddowes and wyues were put to vilany  
Maydens were corrupt / and slayne chamfully  
So all this realme endured confusion  
Put to greuous peyne / deth / and affliction

After these infidels had ben at London  
And there accomplished theyr cruell entent  
They soone proceded towarde Lincoln region  
From thens directly with hasty iugement  
To the realme of Merciens noble and auncient  
Right vnto Repton where the kyng lay  
Robbyng and spoilynge all in theyr way

This kyng of Mercelande called Burdredus  
Regnyng .xii. yere vpon the merciens  
Was clerely expelled by the pagans furious  
And went vnto rome with pure conscience  
Where he is buried by diuine prouidence  
Whiche kyng was colyn by discent liniall  
To blessed Werburge so glorious and pudicall

This gracious virgin and preelect abbasse  
Buried at Hambury (as is sayd before)  
Continued incorrupt and hole in that place  
In vesture and body .ii. hundreth yere and more  
But whan the danes came With suche rigour  
To Repton abbay / than she was resolved  
And of deuocion full richely shyned

¶ Howe the people of Hambury brought the hyne to  
Chestre / and of the solemne receyvinge of it by all the in  
habitauntes of Cheshyre. Cap.ii.

**I**n meane tyme the danes pitously destroyed  
The monasteries of Werburge / Trenta & Medo  
As they many other places had euyl oppressed  
In the north and east part of this region  
The kyngdome of Kent suffred lyke punicion  
The Ile of Wyght endured moche turment  
So dyd the Westmarches / for punysshement

The people of Hambury Wylfully consydering  
The comynge of danes vnto Repton  
And of the departure of Burdred theyr kyng  
Howe all Englande was in great affliction



And howe they were next to endure punicion  
Whiche forsayd Repton was distaunt from Hambury  
The space of .b. mile sayth the history

The Hamburgent With all the comons and clergy  
Dredynge full sore the pagans flagellacions  
Of their lyues desperate / but for the shyne specially  
To our blessed sauour made dayly inuocacions  
With bigils prayers and feruent meditacions  
To preserue the countrey / the relique / the shyne  
From daunger of enmite and miserable ruyne

As they continued in cotidian prayer  
The best remedie sekynge for to fynde  
To auoide beracion and all greuous daunger  
Of theyr great ennemies cursed and unkynde  
The holy goost inspired theyr mynde  
To take the shyne with great humilite  
And bynge it to Chestre from perill and enmyte

They toke this riall relique of reuerence  
With great mekenes deuocion and seruour  
Through the grace of god theyr helpe and defence  
Came towarde Chester with diligence and honour  
A place preordinat by our sauour  
Where her body shulde rest and worshipped be  
Magnified with miracles next our ladie

¶ When the clergie of Chestre and the citezens  
Herde tell of the comynge of this noble abbasse  
They made preparacion and great diligence  
In theyr best maner worship and solace  
Werburge.

To mete this relique of singular grace  
The great estates / and rulers of the countray  
Were redy to honour saint Werburge that day

First was ordeyned a solemne procession  
With crosses / and baners / and surges clere lyght  
The belles were tolled for ioye and deuocion  
The ministres of god in coopes redy dight  
With censours of siluer / to encense her body right  
All prestis and clerkes redy to say and synge  
Proceded in ordre / this holy virgin prayng

Next to the clergie approached in degree  
The lordes of the shyre knyghtes barons all  
With feruent deuocion / prayng the trinite  
Whiche sent to them suche comfort spirituall  
The citezens ensued with gladnes cordiall  
With bokes and beades / magnifieng our maker  
For this great treasure to kepe them from daunger

Venerable birgins next sette in ordre clere  
With lilies in theyr handes / coronate with chastite  
Good widowes and wpues appoynted well were  
Gyuyng true thankes vnto this virgin fre  
Nex them assemble all the commonte  
In all goodly maner dyuised by discrecion  
Prayng saynt Werburge with humiliacion

When they approached to her hie presence  
And comon were afore this relique most riall  
They kneeled all downe with mycle reuerence  
Salutynge the shryne with honour victoriall



Magnifyng With melodye and tunys musicall  
This glorious virgin / nothyng done amis  
Syngynge Te deum to the kyng of blysse

The lordes / the citezings / and all the commons  
Meekely submytted themselfe to the Mayne  
With manyfolde prayses and humble supplicacions  
With interiour loue / and morall discipline  
Trustyng all in her to saue them from ruyne  
From greuous daunger / and cruell enmite  
By her intercession vnto the trinite

They gaue due thankes vnto this abbasse  
Deuoutly sayenge knelyng vpon kne  
Welcome swete lady replet with grace  
The floure of mekenes / and of chastite  
The cristall of clennes and virginite  
Welcome thou art to vs euerychone  
A speciall comfort for vs to trust vpon

Welcome swete princeesse / kynges doughter dere  
Welcome faire creature / and rose of merciens  
The diamonde of dignite / and gēme of shenyng clere  
Virgin and moiniail of mycle excellence  
Welcome holy abbasse of hie preeminence  
The rutilant saphire of syncerite  
Welcome swete patronesse to Chestre cite

Thou art our refuge / and singular succour  
Our sure tuicion next to the trinite  
Our speciall defence at euery hour  
To releue thy seruauntes in all necessity  
Werburge.

Thou art our solace and helpe in eche degre  
Dur ioye / trust / and comfort / and goostly treasure  
Welcome to this towne for euer to endure

**C** Agaynst her conyng into Chestre cite  
The stretes were strawed with flours fragrant  
The mancions and halles edified rialle  
Were hanged with arras precious and pleasaunt  
Torches were caried on eche syde flagrant  
Also ouer the shryne was prepared a canaby  
Of cloth of golde and tissewe riche and costly

Thus with great worship decour and dignite  
Of all the clergie lordis and citezens  
She was receyued with great humilite  
Into the cite with humble reuerence  
The clergie syngyng with mycle diligence  
The comons prayeng with loue feruent  
Folowyng this relique after their entent

In procession they passed all in to the towne  
With ioye and great gladnes ye may besure  
In ordre togyther in charite and deuocion  
Praylyng our sauour and this birgin pure  
They brought full solempne with goostly peasure  
This riall relique to the moost noble place  
Within all the cite as our lordes wyll was

This seconde transacion of this birgin bright  
From Hambury abbay vnto Chestre cite  
Was celebrate with ioye and gladnes full right  
The pere of our saueour in his humanite



viii. hundreth complet .b. and seuentie  
Alured regned than kyng of this region  
Victorious and liberall / coronate at London

This kyng deuyled in .iiii. partes his richesse  
One parte to the poore the seconde to religion  
One thyrd part to scholers / the fourth to bild churches  
And of a day naturall / he made triū diuision  
viii. houres to rede and praye with feruent deuocion  
viii. houres occupied with businesse naturall  
And other .viii. houres to rule his realme riall

henric° .li°.b.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitas honorem  
Armipotens Aluredē dedit / probitasq; laborem :  
Perpetuumq; labor nomen : cui mixta dolori  
Gaudia semper erant : spes semper mixta timori.  
Si modo victus erat / ad crastina bella parabat  
Si modo victor erat / ad crastina bella pauebat  
Jam post transactos regni viteq; labores /  
Christe ei sit vera quies / sceptrumq; perenne.

**C**A litel descripcion of the foundacion of Chestre / and  
of the abbay churche within the sayd cite / where y<sup>e</sup> holy  
Myne by grace remayneth. Cap.iii.

Two cites of legions in cronicles we fynde  
One in south Wales / in the tyme of Claudius  
Called Caerulka / by britons had in mynde  
Orels Caerleon / buylded by kyng Belinus  
Where somtyme was a legion of knyghtes chivalrous  
This cite of legions was whilom the byshops se  
Anto all south wales / nominat Wenedocie  
Werburge. n.iii.

Another cite of legions we may fynde also  
In the west part of Englande / by the water of Dee  
Called Caerlleon of britons longe ago  
After named Chestre by great auctorite  
Julius the emperour sende to this sayd cite  
A legion of knyghtes for to subdue Irelande  
Like wyse dyd Claudius (as we vnderstande)

The founder of Chestre / as sayth Policronicon  
Was Leon Bauer / a myghty stronge gyaunt  
Whiche buylded caues and dongions many one  
No goodly buyldyng / propre ne pleasaunt  
But the kynge Leil a briton sure and valiaunt  
Was founder of Chestre by pleasaunt buyldyng  
And of Caerleil also / named by the kynge

Ranulphus in his cronicle yet doth expresse  
The cite of Chestre edified for to be  
By the noble romans prudence and richesse  
Whan a legion of knyghtes was sende to the cite  
Rather than by the wysdome of Britons or policie  
Obiectyng clere agaynst the britons fundacion  
Whiche auctour resteth in his owne opinion.

A°. gratie. lxx.

Kyng Marius a byton regnyng in prosperite  
In the West partie of this noble region  
Ampliat and walled strongly Chestre cite  
And myghtyly fortified the sayd fundacion  
Thus eche auctour holdeth a singular opinion  
This Marius slewe Reodric kyng of pictis lande  
Callyng the place of his name Westmarilande



This cite of legions so called by the Romans  
Nowe is nominat in latine of his proprete  
Cestria quasi castria / of honour and pleasance  
Proued by the buyldynge of olde antiquite  
In cellers and lowe boultres / and halles of realte  
Lyke a comly castell / myghty stronge and sure  
Eche house like a toure somtyme of great pleasure

Unto the sayd Chestre all north wales subiect were  
For reformation Justice and iugement  
Theyr bysshops see also it was many a yere  
Enduryng the gouernaunce of brutes auncient  
To sarons and britons a place indifferent  
The inhabitauntes of it manfull and liberall  
Constant sad and vertuouse / and gentyll continuall

Of frutes and cornes there is great habundaunce  
Wooddes / parkes / forestes / and beestis of benare  
Pastures / feeldes / commons / the cite to auaunce  
Waters / pooles / pondes / of fysh the great plente  
Most swete holsome ayre by the water of dee  
There is great marchandise / thys / and wyne strang  
With all thyng of pleasure the citezens amonge

The yere of our lorde a hundreth sixe and fyfty  
Reigned vpon this lande a briton kyng Lucius  
Whiche with great desire required instantly  
His realme to be baptized of pope Glentherius  
Whose charitable mocion was harde full gratius  
The pope enioyed / graunted his petition  
And sende .ii. doctours to conuerte this region

Werburge.

n.iiii.

The doctours by prechyng and singular grace  
In short tyme conuerted the greater Britayne  
The people confessed their synne and trespase  
Baptized all were / forgyuenes dyd attayne  
Idolatrie cessed through out this lande certayne  
With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England,  
By faith to god professed was all Wales and Scotlande

Kynge Lucius ordeyned / by the doctours mocion  
xxviii. bishops in this realme for to be  
And .iii. archebishops for gostly exhortacion  
To reduce the people to bertue and humilite  
At London was set the chief archebishops se  
The seconde in south Wales at cite of legions  
The thyrde was at yorke all subiect to the britons

Churches were edified in many a place  
Here in the more Britayne with diligent labour  
Christis faith encreased by speciall grace  
Faithfull religion delated euery hour  
Diuine seruice was songon & sayd with great honour  
True faith and deuocion were dayly encreasyng  
Namely in Chestre by grace continuall abidyng.

Certaynly sith baptysm came to Chestre cite  
Soone after Lucius and afore kynge Arthure  
By the grace of god and their humilite  
The faith of holy churche dyd euer there endure  
Without recidiuacion and infection / sure  
Wherefore it is worthy a singular commendacion  
Above all the citees and townes of this region



The perfect begynnynge and fyrst foundation  
Of the monasterie within the sayd cite  
Was at the same tyme by famous opinion  
That baptym began within this countre  
The great lordes of Chestre of landes and auncetre  
First edified the churche for comfort spirituall  
In honour of the apostels Peter and Paule

Whiche churche was principall to all the citie  
And the mouter churche called withouten doubt  
It was their buriall by great auctorite  
To all this sayd cite / and .vii. myle without  
The cemiterie was large to compase it about  
But what by sufferaunce and processe of tyme  
Many olde customes ben brought now to ruine

In whiche mother churche of Peter and Paule  
All holy sacramentes ministred dayly were  
With great encrease of vertues all  
Continuall enduryng more than .CCC. yere  
In the britons tyme / of blodde noble and clere  
Afore the comynge of saxons to this lande  
Whiche with apostasie infected all Englande

So after that the Angles / Jutes / and saxons  
By fortune of batell / power and policie  
Had clerely subdued all the olde britons  
And them expulsed to wales and wylde countre  
The faith of holy churche remayned at chestre cite  
In the sayd churche truely by singular grace alone  
Like as the faith of Peter neuer fayled at Rome

What tyme saint Austin the doctour of Englande  
Had baptized Ethelbrut kyng of Kent  
And by relacion dyd fully vnderstande  
That the faith of Christ most digne and excellent  
In the cite of legions was truely remanent  
In the churche of the apostoles Peter and Paule  
He magnified our lorde with thanke speciall

That season there was a noble monasterie  
xii. myles from Chestre nominate Bangour  
Where religious monkes lyued vertuouflye  
Almost .iii. thousande / obedient euery hour  
Without possessions / lyuyng by theyr labour  
Unto whiche place he sende for helpe at nede  
To conuert the saxons (sayth venerable Bede)

Saynt Austin approached the cite of legions  
Where the sayd couent afore hym were present  
Whom he required to preche to the saxons  
The faith of holy churche and baptym diligent  
To whose humble prayer / they were disobedient  
Obscuryng no charite / yet for theyr great pride  
Many of them were slayne by kyng Ethelfride

That season the britons remayned vnder licence  
Of Angles and saxons within the sayd cite  
Tyll the dayes of Offa kyng of merciens  
Regnyng in the west marche with great victorie  
Whiche kyng expulsed by power and chivalrie  
All brutes and walgemen clere out of his londe  
In payne of punysshement none there to be sonde



When the said churche haupnge great liberte  
Dayly augmented in vertue and holynes  
Prestis and clerkes prayled the holy trinite  
And the sayd apostoles with great mekenes  
The cite encreased in worshyp and ryches  
Churches were edified with feruent deuocion  
In sondrie places within the sayd towne

This noble kyng Offa agaynst the pagans  
Of .xvii. batels has euer the victorie  
Confederate was with great Charles kyng of Fraunce/  
And edified saint Albans monasterie  
Of Englande first toke the hole monarchie  
Gaue Peter pens vnto the court of Rome  
Translate to Lichefeld, the se of Canturbury  
xxxix. yere regned fully in this region.

**C**A brefe rehersall of the first foundacion of the mynstre  
of Chestre / and of the institucion of secular chanons in  
the tyme of kyng Edwardeseniour. Cap.iiii.

**T**He yere of grace .D.CCC. seipnte and fyue  
Kyng Alured regned vpon this region  
The relique the shryne full memoratpue  
Was brought to Chestre for our consolacion  
Reuerently receyued set with deuocion  
In the moutther churche of saint Peter and Paule  
(As afore is sayd) a place moost principall.

In whiche holy place vnto this present day  
She bodilye resteth by diuine prouidence  
And so by his grace shall continue alway  
In honour worshyp / and mycle reuerence

A deuout oratorie of vertue and excellence  
Prepared by our lorde / where speciall remedy  
Is agayne all greuans in soule and in body

The primatyue gyftes gyuen to the place  
Immediately were after her comynge  
Of deuout people replet with grace  
In the dayes of the forsayd Alured kyng  
Of landes and libertes they made moche offerynge  
To god and saint Werburge / after theyr possession  
Cristyng to her prayer and sure protection

The people with deuocion and mynde feruent  
Gaued diuers enormentes vnto this place  
Some gaue a coope / and some a bestement  
Some other a chalice / and some a corporace  
Many albes and other clothes offred ther was  
Some croses of golde / some bokes / some belles  
The pore folke gaue surges / torches / and towelles

The citezens offered to the sayd virgine  
For the great miracles amonge them wrought  
Many riall gyftes of Jewels to the shrine  
Thankynge our lorde that hath vs all bought  
And blessed Werburge in worde dede and thought  
Women and children she mynded full gracious  
As testifieth the archebisschop Antoninus

Diuine seruice was obserued deuoutly  
Euery day encreasynge with feruent adoration  
As the feest required / and the solemnite  
To the honour of our lorde and hie glorificacion



Preistis and clerkes with pure meditacion  
Obersuyng theiꝝ dutie gaue vertuouſ example  
Of great perfection to the comon people

**A**fter kyng Alured / regned his son  
Edward, ſenior by liniall diſcendence  
Crowned the pere of grace .ix. hundreth and one  
With worldly glorie and great preeminence  
Bulwarked caſtels townes of myghty defence  
Subdued the danes .vii. tymes in batell  
Encreaſed his realme manfully and well.

That tyme the realme of mericiens was tranſlate  
By the kyng / and gyuen to duke Ethelrede  
A noble man of auncetre / politicke and fortunate  
Whiche married his ſyſter lady Elſede  
Doughter to the forſaid valiant kyng Alured  
The ſayd gentelman was wyſe and vertuouſ  
Sad and diſcrete pacient and famous

This lady Elſede duchefſe of mericiens  
Had ſpeciall loue and ſingular affection  
To bleſſed Werburge and true confidence  
Wherefore ſhe mynded with great dilectacion  
To edifie a mynſtre a place of deuocion  
To this holy birgin for profite of her ſoule  
Enlargynge the churche of Peter and of Paule

She moued her huſbande with great mekenes  
To ſupplie the ſame dede of his charite  
And diuers other nobles of theiꝝ goodnes  
For aide in that cauſe after their degree

Joyfull was the duke of the mocion gosse  
Glad were the nobles within all the shire  
To founde a mynstre after her desire

Afoze the holy roode in a table writen is  
At saint Johans churche without the sayd cite  
Howe that prince Edmund the thynde son e wis  
Of Edward senior true foundour shulde be  
To whom lady Elsed was aunt by auncetre  
So betwix twayne was founded in short space  
An holy mynstre of vertue full and grace

They sende for masons bpon euery syde  
Counnyng in geometrie / the foundacion to take  
For a large mynstre longe hie and wyde  
Substancially wrought / the best that they can make  
To the honour of god / for saynt Werburge sake  
At the est ende taken theyr sure foundacion  
Of the apostoles churche / ioynnyng both as one

When it was edified / and curiously wrought  
And all thyng ended / in goodly proporcion  
Than riche enormentes were offred and brought  
Of the said nobles with great deuocion  
Temporall landes / rentes / possession  
Were gyuen for euer to mayntayne the place  
Of blessed Werburge by singular grace

Spirituall ministres were elect also  
Secular chanons of great humilite  
To syng and psalmodise our sauour bnto  
Within the sayd mynstre haupyng a perpetuite



Prebendes were assigned to that fraternite  
With towne / borowes / and fredomes manifest  
Continuallie encreasynge vnto the conquest

And the olde churche of Peter and of Paule  
By a generall counsell of the spiritualte  
With helpe of the duke moost principall  
Was translate to the myddes of the sayd cite  
Where a paretthe churche was edified truele  
In honour of the aforesayd apostoles twayne  
Whiche shall for euer by grace diuine remayne

Also we may note holdyng none opinion  
This lady Elde of her charite  
Of the sayd mother churche translate the patron  
Caused the sayd oratorie reconciled to be  
In the honour of the most blessed trinite  
And of saynt Oswalde martyr and kyng  
For the loue she had to hym continuyng

The yere of our lorde .ix. hundreth and .liii.  
This noble duchesse with mycle royalte  
Reedified Chestre / and fortified it full ryght  
Churche / house / and wall decayed piteousle  
Thus brought vnto ruyne was Chestre cite  
First by Ethelfride kyng of Northumberlande  
And by danes / norwaies beryng all Englande

Also she enlarged this sayd olde cite  
With newe myghty walles stronge all about  
Almost by proporcion double in quantite  
To the forther byldynge brought without dout

She compassed in the castell enemies to hold out  
Within the sayd Walles to defend the towne  
Agaynst danes and walsheñe to dryue them all downe

After the deth of her husband Ethelrede  
She ruled the realme of mercelande manfully  
Buylded churches / and townes repared in dede  
As Staford / Warwike / Thonwort / and Shirisbury  
Of newe she edified Kuncoñ and Edisbury  
The body of saynt Oswald also she translate  
From Bardeney to Gloucetur there to be tumulate

Where she edified a noble monastery  
With licence of her brother afore nominate  
In honour of saint Peter / ouer the blessed body  
Of the sayd saint Oswald / kyng and marty? coronate  
In wiche monastery this lady was tumulate  
The pere of our lorde .ix. hundreth and nyntene  
Whom myn auctour prayseth in this wordes serene

Henric<sup>o</sup> .li. b.

O Elflada potens / o terror virgo virorum :  
Vixitrix nature nomine digna viri.  
Te quoq; splendidior fecit natura puellam  
Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri.  
Te mutare docet sed solum nomina serus  
Tu regina potens / rexq; trophea parans  
Jam nec cesarei tant meruere triumphu  
Caesare splendidior virgo virago . Vale.

¶ Of the notable myracles of saynt Werburge shewed  
in the tyme of chanons / and fyrst howe she saued Chest  
from distruction of walsheñen

Cap. b.



**T**his glorious Werburge and virgin pure  
By singular grace of god omnipotent  
Shewed many myracles to euery creature  
To blynde / dombe / halt / lame / and impotent  
In the cite of Chestre / whan her thynne was present  
Like wyse as in her lyfe at Wedon / at Hambury  
Witneseth the same her true legende and history

Where to the honour / prayse / and laudacion  
Of Jesu / the seconde persone in trinite  
And of this virgin a speciall commendacion  
We purpose to reherse nowe with charite  
Under the protection of you that shall the reders be  
Parte of the myracles / with mynde diligent  
In this humble stile / and sentence consequent

The first myracle / that our blessed sauour  
Shewed for his spoules / after her translacon  
To Chestre : was nye the tyme of Edward senour  
Son to kyng Alured famous of renoune  
The Name of britons was chaunged that season  
Were named walsmen in the montaynes segregate  
Euer to the saxons hauynge inwarde hate

The Walsmen that tyme had ouer them a kyng  
Called Griffinus / to be theyr gouernour  
Electe by the comons their appetite folowynge  
Endurate with malice / couetise and rancour  
Ennemies to englyshmen / as is said before  
This kyng entended by mortall enuy  
The cite of Chestre to spoyle and distraye  
Werburge.

A myghty host disceded from the mountans  
Well armed and strongly approching the cite  
Prepared for batell with them great ordinaunce  
The sayd Griffinus and all his company  
With his power passed ouer the water of Dee  
Whiche ryuer adioynneth to the sayd towne  
Betwene Englande and Wales a sure diuision

This kynge layd siege vnto Chestre cite  
With all his great host / there honour to wyn  
By policie of warre / encreasynge myghtyle  
For whiche the citezens remainyng within  
were sore disconsolate like for to twyn  
With wofull heuy hartes they dyd call and crye  
Upon blessed Merburge for helpe and remedye

The charitable chanons with great deuocion  
Toke the holy shryne of theyr patrones  
Set it on the towne walles for helpe and tuicion  
Trustynge on her to be saued from distres  
But one of the ennemyes with great wychednes  
Smot the sayd shryne in castyng of a stone  
And it empaired / piteous to loke vpon

Anone great punysshement vpon them all lyght  
The kyng and his host were smytten with blyndnes  
That of the cite / they had no manner of syght  
And he that smote the holy shryne doubtles  
Was greuously vexed with a sprite of darkenes  
And with hidous payne expired miserably  
The kynge was sore adred / and all his company



Shortly the kynge remoued his great host  
Departed from the cite without any praye  
And gaue in commaundement in euery coost  
Saynt Werburge landes to meyntheyne alway  
Assigned her possessions euer after that day  
With the signe of the crosse a token euident  
In pleasynge this birgin / for drede of punysshement.

C. Howe saynt Werburge cured and healed a woman  
thre tymes (whiche was halte and lame) to helth and p-  
prosperite agayne. Cap. vi.

**I**N the cite of Chestre (the legende doth expresse)  
An honest matrone dwelled / Egidia nominat  
Whiche by continuaunce / and payne of sickenes  
Was made halt and lame / of helth all desperate  
yet to saynt Werburge her hart was eleuate  
Instantly required with humble supplicacion  
This holy birgin for helth / and preseruacion

Anone by the merite of this lady clere  
The patient restored to helth and prosperite  
Gaue honour and thanks to Werburge and prayer  
Entendynge euer after her true seruaunt to be  
And truely continue lyuyng in pure chastite  
But shortly she brake her promesse made insyght  
Folowynge her appetite and carnall lustes full ryght

She had great riches welth and prosperite  
And married with pleasure after her entencion  
Where thries she endured her olde infirmite  
And thries was cured by meke intercession  
Werburge. o.ii.

To helth of body from peynfull contraction  
Thus by the merite of this virgin pure  
She was deliuered from peyne thries to pleasure

This forsayd Cadgide prudently ponderyng  
These notable miracles with her gostly eye  
Gaue great cōmendacion and speciall thankyng  
To almyghty god / with feruent humilite  
And to saynt Werburge knelynge on kne  
Came to her oratorie and gaue an oblacion  
To the holy thryne with singular deuocion

**C.** Howe saynt Werburge saued Chestre from innume-  
rable barbarike nacions / purposynge to distroye and  
spoyle the sayd cite vtterly Cap.vii.

**A**nother tyme innumerable barbarike nacions  
Came to spoyle Chestre to robbe it and distroye  
(Sayth the historye) from diuers regions  
Harolde kyng of danes / the kyng of gotes & galwed  
Maucolyn of Scotlande and all theyr company  
With baners displayed well armed to fyght  
Theyr tentes rially in hooles heth were pyght

They set theyr ordinaunce agaynst the towne  
Upon euery side / timorous for to se  
Namely at the northgate they were redy bowne  
By myght police to haue entred the cite  
The citezens dreyng to be in captiuite  
Made intercession vnto this holy abbasse  
For theyr deliuerance in suche extreme case



The deuout chanons sette the holy thryne  
Agaynst theyr enemies at the sayd northgate  
Trustyng to Werburge to saue them from ruyne  
And shewe some myracle to them disconsolate  
For the citezens were of their lyues desperate  
Passyng mannes mynde to escape theyr daunger  
But all only by merite of this virgin clere

As the kynges were sautyng this forsayd cite  
Trustyng for a praye to haue it euery hour  
One of the sayd ennemies replet with iniquite  
Nat worshyppynge y<sup>e</sup> birgin / nor dredynge our sauour  
Smote this riall relique with a stone in his rancour  
Broke therof a corner curiously wrought  
Cast all to the ground: than sorowe came vnsought

The sayd malefactour nat passyng the place  
Cured with the deuill for his greuous offence  
Roryng and yellyng his outrageous trespass  
Toke his tonge a sonder in wodely violence  
Miserable expired afore them in presence  
Satan ceased nat to shewe great punysshement  
Upon his soule and body / by signes euident

These kynges consideryng this soden vengeance  
Amonge them all lyght so soone and hastely  
Shortly remoued theyr great ordinaunce  
Departed from the cite with theyr company  
Callyng on this virgin fast for grace and mercy  
Promyttynge neuer after to retourne agayne  
To disquiete her seruauntes and cite in certayne  
Werburge o.iii.

**C.** Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent frute to a  
barrayne woman by syngular prayer made vnto her  
The .viii. chapitre.

**A** Noble gentilman / a consul in office  
Descendynge of the hie and riall blodde of costy  
Elected a spouses at his owne deuice  
A swete faire gentilwoman curtes and comly  
Nominat Judith / ioynded to hym in matrimony  
With whom this lady lyued a longe season  
Barrayn and fruteles of generacion

She daily lamented her great wretchednes  
As woman infortunate full of miserie  
Prayed to saynt Werburge with interiour mekenes  
For remedy and helpe agaynst that woful infamye  
Desired to haue issue and frute of her bodye  
If it pleased god / and this virgin also  
Most greattest comfort to bynge her hert from wo

Saynt Werburge appered to her in vision  
In white bright besture / clere as the cristall  
Exprestrynge wordes of great consolacion  
Most ioyfull to Judith to make rehersall  
Commaundyng her by the effect speciall  
To go to her churche with syngular deuocion  
And praye our sauour with humble supplicacion

Also for to compasse her holy aulter  
With a linen cloth / knelyng on her kne  
And after for to take the same cloth in fer<sup>e</sup>  
And compas her wombe about reuerentle



This Judith was ioyfull / and rose by yerle  
And truely fulfylled this gossly vision  
From thens departed to her propre mancion

Soone after this wyfe afore reherfed  
Conceyued a childe and had succession  
Prayfing this virgin in hart worde and dede  
And after the tyme of her purificacion  
Of the same faire cloth she made oblacion  
Richely set in syluer / well wrought in compas  
With many riche enornementes she sende to this place

After came herselfe vnto the monastery  
With many of her neyghbours / ther<sup>e</sup> nye dwellyng  
Prayfing and laudyng this glorious lady  
With cordiall thankynges makyng theyr offeryng  
Of this great myracles true witnes bearyng  
Departed from the place with ioy and deuocion  
All the sayd company / eche to theyr mancion.

**C.** Of a woman great with childe with peyne brought  
out of her wytte / by saynt Werburge was restoured to  
reason agayne. Cap. ix.

**I**n the prouince of Chestre / knowen it is of olde  
A certayne man dwelled / of great honeste  
Whiche had a doughter disposed manyfolde  
To sondre vertues / clennes / and humilite  
This humble mayde ioyned was in matrimonye  
To an honest yong man / of whom she conceyued  
And was great with childe / openly perceyued

When the tyme approached of her deliuerance  
Tered she was with mycle wo and payne  
Continuallly enduryng / with suche hidous greuaunce  
That out of her mynde she went incertayne  
All phisike and medicyns were founde to her in bayne  
No comfort in erth helpe nor remedye  
For her myght be founde in suche extremite

Her father and mother / and her frendes all  
Brought theyr dere doughter with great deuocion  
To saynt Werburge churche / requirynge speciall  
This blessed virgin / with humble incescession  
To helpe the pacient from all vexacion  
Promyttynge an oblacion to this lady bryght  
When she vnto reason were comen a ryght

And as she slepped at the aulter ende  
Most fully cruciat with peynes hiduous  
Passyng mannes cure it for to amende  
Anone by the merite of this virgin glorious  
She was released from all payne greuous  
And fully restored to her reason agayne  
Had good deliuerance / and spedde well in certayne

Whiche myracle knowen / her frendes euerychone  
And all the good matrons of the sayd cite  
Came holly togyther with theyr oblacion  
To the holy Myne thankynge with hart fre  
This blessed virgin of her beniguite  
Whiche is so redy a mediatrice alway  
To helpe her true seruantes both nyght and day



**C.** Howe an other woman vnlaufully wurkyng was  
made blynde / and by saynt Werburge restored was to  
her syght agayne. Cap. x.

Within the same cite afore the abbay gate  
Dwelled a woman / which brake the comaundement  
Of god and holy church / hys sabbot day dyd violate  
Unlaufully wurkyng : wherfore great punysshement  
Fell vpon this woman with peynes equiuallent  
Sodaynly smytten / wurkyng full busely  
With greuous blyndnes / and mycle miserye

This woman consyderynge her syght was gone  
The pleasure of this worlde her helpe and succour  
Hauynge to lyue by / small riches or none  
Cried maynly out out alas euery hour  
Who is me wretche fulfilled with dolour  
Alas I was borne to abyde this wofull day  
My maker to displease / alas what shall I say ?

She called to memorie with hys discrecion  
The myracles that Werburge shewed to mankynde  
By grace she repented / with suche contricion  
That water distilled from her eyes blynde  
Dolefully lamentynge / that she was so vnkynde  
Ruthfully was brought to Werburge oratory  
Trustyng in this virgin to haue remedy

As she continued in her supplicacion  
Wofully wepyng / abidyng the great grace  
Of blessed Werburge / with singular inuocacion  
Anone she was cured to helth and solace

Werburge

p.i.

Restored to her eyesight / she passed the place  
Praised our lord and this virgin pure  
Was a holy woman after ye may be sure.

C. How saint Werburge restored to helth and p[er]sp[er]ite  
bi. lame and halt p[er]sons by singular grace. Cap.xi.

**T**he excellent fame of this glorious lady  
Dilated was through all this region  
Manifest by myracles full honorably  
Therefore from diuers partes came many a person  
For helth of body and gostly conuersacion  
Some to be cured from payne intollerable  
And some of oldsores that were incurable

Amonge whom there came vnto her place  
Sire wofull persones / cured for to be  
Halt blynde and lame besekyng her of grace  
With humble supplicacion vpon them haue pite  
With wepyng treares sayenge / o souerayn ladie  
O imperiall princeesse / and kynges doughter dere  
Heele our disease by thy instant prayer

O blessed virgin and holy moiniall  
O glorious abbasse / and worthy gouernour  
O pereles parens and minstre spirituall  
O celestiall gemme resplendent with honour  
Praye for vs wretches vnto our sauour  
That we may opteyne here mercy and grace  
Cured of our sekenes / after to se thy face

Thy name transcendeth this realme swete lady



Thy myracles magnifyen thy great goodnes  
Thy worshyp encrease with honour and glorie  
Daily euermore through thy great holynes  
Shewe now thy power / cure vs from sekenes  
That by the we may prayse the kyng of blis  
As thou hast cured manyone or this

By these meke prayers / in hert full penitent  
And many other orisons sayd priuatly  
Callyng on this virgin with deuocion feruent  
For certayne / or they passed the monastery  
They were all cured from peyne and malady  
In wytnes wherof / and triall as it was  
They staues remayned longe after in the place

**C** Howe a yonge man thries hanged vnlaufully Was  
thries delyuered by saynt Werburge from dethe to lyfe  
and lyberte. Cap. xii.

**A** Lmyghty god gaue in commaundement  
By moises lawe / to his people echone  
No innocent to sle by wrongfull iudgement  
Nor causeles to punyshe by greuous oppression  
Also to beware of lyght suspicion  
Wherof a myracle we shall now expresse  
Done in Chestre cite by Werburge they patronesse

A certayne yonge man dwelled in the cite  
Honest in maners / and of good conuersacion  
Disposed to vertue and humilite  
Was arrest and taken of a lyght suspicion  
By the officers and rules of the sayd towne  
Werburge. p. ii.

Gyltles accused most innocently  
Condemned and iudged to deth shamfully

After sentence gyuen / ministres were all redy  
Upon the iudgement to do execucion  
He was fettred and brought to the gebbet by and by  
And as a stronge these hanged therupon  
His frendes and colyns for hym made great mone  
Alas what tongue myght expresse the wo  
They made that tyme departynge hym fro

And as this innocent hang in his payne  
He called to mynd the manyfolde goodnes  
The myracles of Werburge she wed her certayne  
Howe she had saued many in great distress  
So whan he myght no wordes expresse  
In mynde he required her / and humble dyd pray  
From shamfull deth to saue hym that day

Whan all the officers departed were thens  
Supposynge the soule seperate from the body  
A white doue descended afore them in presence  
And lyght vpon the gebbet immediatly  
The byrde with his byll brake the rope truely  
The prisoner escaped that tyme from deth  
Shortly reuiuyng toke naturall breth

Whiche thyng notified so meruailous in syght  
The ministers returned / they labour in bayne  
Toke this innocent by power and myght  
Upon the sayd gebbet hanged hym agayne  
Thus he was deliuered by myracle from payne



The tortuous turmentours cessed their tyranny  
Permytted the prisoner to go at liberte

Whiche myracle knowen / his frendes and colyns all  
Returned agayne with glad mynde and chere  
The prisoner mette them louyng god in speciall  
And blessed Werburge in his best manere  
The deuout citezens approched them nere  
Went all to the shryne the virgin thankyng  
The belles were tolled for ioy of this thyng

¶ Howe at the maner place of Apton saint Werburge  
restrayned wyld horses from distruction of cornes put  
in by theyr ennemys. Cap.xiii.

Also the thyrde season approched to Chestre cite  
Many cruell ennemys in the part of Wirall  
Purposyng to spoyle / and destroy all the countre  
The people and theyr frutes / theyr corne and cattall  
The citezens dredyng to be captyue and thrall  
Fortified the cite with men of armes bright  
Hauyng sure artillarie for to defende and fight

The husbandes of the countrey about there dwellyng  
Agaynst the sayd ennemys makyng sore prouysion  
Brought their corne & cattell / their husoldr remaynyng  
In assurance to be / to the parke of Apton  
Saynt Werburge landes from all distruction  
Whiche parke from Apton was distaunt a myle space  
A prebende to a chanon of her mynstre and place

These Wycked ennemys fulfylled with malice  
Werburge. p.iii.

Agaynst all conscience and ordre of charite  
In no maner wise dreyng the hie iustice  
Entred the sayd parke with mycle cruelte  
Pulled downe the paale at pleasure and liberte  
But in theyr horses made great distruction  
Of cornes and catell of a hie presumption

Werburge remembryng theyr great wyckednes  
Theyr malice and myschief agaynst her possession  
By myracle shewed her power and goodnes  
Preseruyng her seruauntes from all veracion  
And punysshing her ennemies with great affliction  
As she hath done many seasons or this  
By mean to her spouse our lord kyng of blis

When the corne sheuys lay broken afore them playne  
The horses had no power any part to take  
For why? by myracle / theyr heedes all in certayne  
Were vpholde in the ayre / theyr bodyes sore dyd quake  
They touched no frutes / wass they dyd none make  
Of the principall doers / some raged out of mynde  
Some smetyn with palsy / some lepre halt and blynde

Whiche punysshement knowen vnto all the host  
The rulers and captens without any delaye  
Knyt agayne the sheuys / that none shulde be lost  
With tremblyng hartes humbly began to praye  
This holy virgin to saue them that daye  
Upon a condicion / escapyng from payne  
Enduryng theyr lyfe neuer to turne agayne

From that tyme furth ther dar° no nacion



Consyderyng the power of this virgin pure  
Approchyng Chestre cite to make derogacion  
Denmarke Goet nor Galway scot ye may be sure  
Cruell danes nor walsmen dare nat procure  
Wherfore the citezens haue cause to loue the place  
And thanke this virgin for her helpe and grace

**C** Howe a chanon of Chestre hauyng his leg and thie  
broken was restaured to helth by saynt Werburge hys  
patronesse. Cap. xiiii.

Within Chestre mynstre that holy place  
Dwelled a chanon nominate Alminus  
Sad of disposicion by syngular grace  
Humble and pacient / discrete and bertuous  
Liberall and honest / gentyll and piteous  
And for a pastyme this was his pleasure  
To hunt and to hauke to confort nature

And as this chanon rode for his solace  
On huntynge with other honest company  
By fortune vnfrendly / the more pite was  
Both horse and man fell to grounde sodendly  
In perill of theyr lyues standynge in ieoperdye  
The horse downe lyenge oppressed the chanon  
Broke his leg a sondre / with blod great effusion

When by his company the chanon was by take  
He fell in a swoone for anguill the wo and payne  
All worldly riches redy to forsake  
For one hour of quietnes to be had agayne  
Unto his mansion they brought him certayne  
Werburge. p. iiii.

Kyng of this lande regnyng in honour  
With power regalite by true succession  
Valeant in chivalry and actes euerychone  
Subdued danes / scottes / norwayes / britons all  
Optyened triumphe / and dignite imperiall

The fourth yere of his reigne / and the yere of grace  
viii. hundert .ii. and seuenty by full computacion  
Guy erle of Marwike by fortune slayne hase  
Colbrond the gyaunt / floure of danes nacion  
The sayd kyng Ethelstan by power and renowne  
Thries subdued danes / and slewe the kyng of Irelade  
Nominat prince Anlaff as we vnderstande

This noble Ethelstan was good and gracious  
To all holy churche / namely to religion  
Ryghtfull in iudgement / liberall and piteous  
To his true subiectes through his dominion  
To mynstres and holy places had great affection  
Confirmed theyr foundacions with libertes clere  
Whose noble actes be touched a lytell here

*Regia progenies produxit nobile stemma.  
Cum tenebris nostris illuxit splendida gemma  
Magnus Ethelstanus patrie decus, orbita recti  
Illustris probitas a vero nescia flecti.*

After Ethelstan regned Edmunde his brothur  
Fyue yeres in honour / hauyng great victory  
Princis Ered and Edwyn succided eytherothur  
In great busines with scottes and danes truly  
Next whom meke Edgar / sayth the history  
xvi. yere of age / coronate at Kyngston  
With peace and quietnes first ruled this region.



In whose natiuite the blessed Dunstan  
Herde angels singe with mycle melody  
Peace is now come to Englande certan  
Quietnes / and rest / honour / and victory  
Of cornes and frutes that tyme was plentie  
Danes / norwaies / scottes / britons in euery place  
Submytted them selfe to the kynges grace

Science encreased true loue and amite  
Vertue was exalted in all this region  
Monasteries were edified of his benigne  
Endowed with riches / and riall possession  
xl. religious places by famous opinion  
Were newly buylded by the sayd noble kyng  
In sondry places of this realme standyng

Secular prestes expulsed sothely were  
From diuers monasteries with great discrecion  
Religious persones repleit with vertue clere  
Entred their places cause of deuocion  
Charite was feruent and holy religion  
The lyues of sayntes were soth in eche place  
And witten in legendes for our comfort and grace

Many shypes were made bpon the kynges cost  
To serche by the se all his lande about  
That no alian entre in no maner cost  
By policie and manhod to holde all his ennemies out  
Danes / norwaies / scottes durst nat ones loke out  
Suche drede all nacions had ensuyng the tyme  
That kyng Edgar<sup>e</sup> regned by prouidence diuine  
In progresse he passed ones in the yere  
Eche quarter of the realme with his company

To se that his subiectes well ordred were  
And the laue obserued / iustice with mercy  
Than was none oppression wronges nor iniury  
Debate malice rancour myght nat be founde  
True loue and charite was in all the londe

Kynge Edgar° approched the cite of legions  
Nowe called Chestre / specified afore  
Where .iiii. kynges mette of diuers nations  
Kedy to gyue Edgare reuerence and honour  
Legiance and fidelite depely sworne full sore  
At the same cite : after to be obedient  
Promyt at his callyng to come to his parliament

From the Castell he went to the water of Dee  
By a priue posturne through walles of the towne  
The kyng toke his barge with mycle rialte  
Rowyng bywarde to the churche of saynt Iohn  
The forsayd .iiii. kynges with hym went alone  
Kynge Edgar° kept the storne / as most principall  
Eche prince had an oxe to labour withall

When the kyng had done his pylgrimage  
And to the holy roode made oblacion  
They entred agayne into the sayd barge  
Passyng to his place with great renowne  
Than Edgare spake in praylyng of the crowne  
All my successours may glad and ioyfull be  
To haue suche homage honour and dignite

Also it is to be had in memory  
That this sayd Edgar° and his princis all



Came with great reuerence vnto the monastery  
To worshyp saynt Werburge with mynde liberall  
Where he gaue fredoms and priuileges speciall  
With singular possessions of his charite  
Confirmynge the olde grauntes by hys auctorite

This Edgar<sup>o</sup> was nominate in cronicles expresse  
The floure of Englade / regnyng as emperour  
Lyke wise as Romulus to romains was of prowes  
Cyrus to the persis / to the grekes their conquerour  
Great Charles to frenchemen / to troians Hector  
Famous in victorie preignant in wysdome  
Vertuous and pacient / feruent in deuocion

Henric<sup>o</sup>. li. b.

Auctor opum vindixit scelerum / largitor honorum  
Sceptryger Edgarus regna superna petit.  
Hic alter Solomon / legum pater / orbita pacis  
Quod clauit bellis / clauit inde magis.  
Templa deo / templis monachos / monachis dedit agros :  
Requitie lapsum / iusticieq; locum.

Also from the byrthe of our blessed sauour  
A thousande fyfty yere / and seyn expresse  
In the tyme of saynt Edward kyng and confessor  
As William Maluesbury beareth wytnes  
Chan Leofricus a man of great mekenes  
Was erle of Chestre and duke of merciens  
Son to duke Leoffwin by liniall discence

This noble Leofric sayth policronicon  
Of his deuocion and beningne grace

Namely by the counsell and vertues mocion  
Of his lady Godith countes whiche was  
Reedified churches decayed in many a place  
Also he founded the monastery of Leonence  
By the towne of Herford / and the place of Wenlece

This erle repareled a noble olde monastery  
Cueham vpon Auen / gaue them great riches  
Also founder was of the abbay in couentre  
Made the cite free for loue of his countesse  
At the cite of Chestre of his great goodnes  
He repared the College churche of saynt Iohn  
Endowed it with riches and enormentes many one

This erle of Chestre the sayd Leofricus  
Of his charite / and feruent deuocion  
To the honour of god / reedified full gracious  
The mynstre of Werburge within the sayd towne  
Gaue unto it riches and singular possession  
Endowed the sayd place with fredoms and liberte  
And speciall priuileges confirmed by auctozite

So the sayd place encreased in honour  
In great possessions / fredoms / and richesse  
With singular deuocion vnto our sauour  
And prayse to saynt Werburge theyr patronesse  
The chanons obserued vertue and clenness  
Daily augmentyng by diuine sufferaunce  
Vnto the comyng to this lande of normans

**O**f the comyng of Wyllyam conquerour to this lade  
and howe Hug. Lupe his syster soune was founder of



**T**he yere of grace .M. lxx and thescour  
The .xiii. day of the moneth of october  
The duke of Normandy / William conquerour  
Fight a stronge batell / displayed his baner  
Of normans and frenchemen hauynge great power  
Subdued kyng Harold / opteyned all the londe  
Was coronate at London / made saxons all bonde

For diuerse great causes he came to this countre  
First for deth of Alured his nere kynsman  
The proscripcion of Robert archebissshop of Cant bury  
The periury of Harolde agaynst conscience playne  
The promys of saynt Edward made to hym certayne  
That the sayd William shulde enioye the crowne  
If the kyng departed without succession

A generall counsell was celebrate at London  
That all bysshops sees by helpe of the conquerour  
From borowes shulde be translate to a famous towne  
Within their diocess / to the greater honour  
Ryght so they all were / sayth myn auctour  
Also the see of Lichefeld was translate to Chester  
By helpe and sufferaunce of the bysshop Peter

With William conquerour came to this region  
A noble worthy prynce nominate Hug. Lupus  
The dukes son of Britayne / and his syster son  
Flourynge in chivalry bolde and victorious  
Manfull in batell / liberall and bertuous  
To whom the kyng gaue for his enheritaunce

The counte of Cheshire with the appurtinaunce

By victorie to wyne the forsayd Erledom  
Frely to gouerne it as by conquest right  
Made a sure chartre to hym and his succession  
By the swerde of dignite to holde it with myght  
And to calle a parlement to his wyll and syght  
To orde his subiectes after true iustice  
As a prepotent prince / and statutes to deuise

This valeant knyght with a myghty host  
Descended from London to wyne the sayd counte  
But the lordes of Cheshire rose from euery cost  
Agaynst hym made batell and had the victorie  
Chies they preuayled agaynst the erle trulie  
After he optayned to his fame and honour  
The erledom of Chestre entred as a conquerour

He gaue to his knyghtes after theyr desire  
Lordshyps and franchises / and great possession  
With riche mariages within all Cheshire  
Exalted his seruautes to hye promocion  
Unto holy churche had special deuocion  
Maynteynge iustice / commendynge bertue  
Deposyng vice by the helpe of Jesu

After the departure of his vncke the conquerour  
Whan William Ruff. toke the regalite  
Than blessed Anselme the famous doctour  
Dyd biset this lande oft tymes of his charite  
Glad to refourme / and brynge vnto vnite  
Where was debate / and mycle diuision



By diligent labour and good exhortacion

This forsayd erle of his benignite  
Interiorly lounge holy religion  
Repleit with bertue and feruent charite  
Sende for saynt Anselme bnto London  
To come to Chestre at his petition  
And there for to founde a religious place  
In honour of Werburge by diuine grace

Blessed Anselme at the erles supplicacion  
Came bnto Chestre with gladde chere shortly  
Where he founded an abbaye of holy religion  
A pleasaunt place and a noble monasterye  
In worshyp of god / and saynt Werburge sothely  
The yere of grace by full computacion  
A thousande .iiii. score .xiii. yere alon

All secular prestes / and chanons also  
Within the sayd place afore tyme dwellyng  
Were clerely dismyssed / and letten go  
Religious monkes perfect in luyng  
Receyued were gladly their rule professynge  
Saynt Anselme ordeyned Ric<sup>e</sup> of Beccens  
To be their abbot with great preeminence

Landes / rentes / libertes / and great possession  
Franches / fredoms / and priuileges riall  
Were gyuen mekely to that foundacion  
Maners / borowes / townes / with the people thrall  
And many faire churches / chapels withall  
Wardes and mariages were gyuen that season  
Werburge. q.i.

To god and saynt Werburge cause of deuocion

Kyng Wyllyam Ruff. son to the conquerour  
Confirmed the foundacion / with great auctorite  
Endowed the monastery with mycle honour  
Of fredoms / franchises / also liberte  
The place that tyme was made as fre  
As the sayd erle was in his castell  
Or as hert myght thynke / or tonge myght tell

Saynt Anselme departed thence vnto London  
And was made archebisschop of Canturbury  
To the place he gaue a sure confirmacion  
With singular priuileges to be had in memory  
Of whom it is written here folowynge truly  
Hic vir dum vixit extirpantes maledixit  
Werburge iura presentia sine futura.

This noble prince gaue of his charite  
Riall riche enormentes vnto the sayd place  
Coopes / crosse / Jewels of great rialte  
Chales / censures / bestures / and landes dyd purchase  
A librarie of bokes to rede and synge there was  
Of whiche riall iewels and bokes some remayne  
Within the sayd monastery to this day certayne

The founder also buylded within the monasterie  
Many myghty places / conuenient for religion  
Compased with stronge walles on the west partie  
And on the other syde with Walles of the towne  
Closed at euery ende with a sure postron  
In south part the cimiterie inuironed rounde about



For a sure defence ennemies to holde out

The .ix. yere afre this riall foundacion  
This noble founder the .xxvii. day of July  
Departed towarde the heuently macion  
Nert whom his son Richarde succeded truly  
Than regnyng in honour the first kyng Henry  
Also the place had their fraunches and freedom  
Afore the sayd cite a hundreth yere and one

**C** Howe saynt Werburge taught her monke and cha-  
playne to kepe paciens for his greater merite and glo-  
rye to come. Cap. xvii.

**A**fter the transacion of Chestre monasterye  
From secular chanons to monkes religious  
By helpe of Anselme archebisschop of Canturburye  
Supportyng therto the founder Hug. Lupus  
As afore is specified full memorous  
A monke there dwelled of vertuous disposicion  
Under obedience / nominate dan Symon

This brother Simon his tyme well blyng  
Nowe in vertuous study / nowe in contemplacion  
Nowe in deuout prayer / nowe busely wytyng  
Sometyme in solace / and honest recreation  
Observed deuoutly his holy religion  
Obedience / pacience / and wylfull pouerte  
Meekenes / meditacion / with pure chastite  
For whiche examples and signes of vertue  
Diuers of his bretherne repleit with enuy  
Were fully confederate entending to subdue  
This honest prest by malice and policy

Werburge.

q. ii.

They layd to his charge open wronges and iniury  
They punysshed & oppressed hym with great affliction  
Dayly augmentyng by subtyll collusion

Dan Symon offendyng no brother at all  
Observed pacience / euer callynge for grace  
Weeping lamentyng with syghes cordiall  
His fortune unfrendly remediles / in that case  
Entended to depart to some other place  
Of a scrupulous conscience / seying no redresse  
Was redy to procede plunged in heuynes

Merburge appered to this monke in vision  
Bryghter than Phebus in his meridian spere  
My seruauant she sayd callyng hym vpon  
Why be ye so sad / and heuy of chere ?  
Wheder entende ye ? shewe the mater clere  
Alas he sayd ma dame and patronesse  
For sorowe I can nat my peynes expresse

Diuers of my bretherne ben greued at me  
Cerryng me dayly with great tribulacion  
Causeles on my part deserued trule  
In worde or en dede gyyng none occasion  
I can nat be quiet amonge that congregacion  
Wherfore swete lady vnder your licence  
I purpose to departe in sauynge my conscience

Saynt Merburge pacified his mynde and entent  
With wordes of comfort and holy scripture  
Made hym be humble in hert and pacient  
Thy sufferauce shalbe great ioye and pleasure



And for thy pacience thou maist be sure  
To haue rewarde in blis perpetuall  
At thy departure from this lyfe mortall

Wherwith saynt Werburge departed sodeinl  
To the blys of heuyn euer enduryng  
The monke was meke in hert and mery  
Observed her doctrine this lyfe continuyng  
Gaued good example of perfect lyuyng  
Unto his bretherne / and at his departure  
For his pacience passed to eternall pleasure

¶ Howe sondes rose vp within the salt see agaynst Hil  
burgher by saynt Werburge at the petition of the con-  
stable of Chestre. Ca. xviii.

¶ The seconde erle of Chestre after the conquest  
Was erle Richard / son to Hug. Lupus  
Whiche Richarde entended all thyng to the best  
To visite saynt Minifride in hert desirous  
Upon his iourney went / myn auctour sayth thus  
Deuoutly to holy well in pylgrimage  
For his great merite and gostly aduantage

¶ When the wicked walshe men herd of his comyng  
After a meke maner vnto that party  
They made insurrection inwardly gladdying  
Descended from the mountaynes most furiously  
Agaynst the erle raised a cruell company  
Byt wxt hym and Chestre lettynge the kyngis way  
Purposynge to slee or take hym for a praye  
Werburge. q. iii.

The erle son perceyued theyr malicious entent  
In all hast possible sende to Chestre secretly  
To warne his constable by loue and commaundemt  
Wylliam the son of Wigell / to rayse a great army  
To mete hym at Basingwerke right sone and spedely  
For his deliuerance from deth and captiuite  
Of the wyld walschemen / without humanite

The constable congregate in all goodly hast  
A myghty stronge host / in theyr best arraye  
Towarde Hilburghee on iourney ridyng fast  
Trustyng vpon shippes all them to conuaye  
Whiche was a riall rode that tyme nyght and daye  
And whan they theder came shyping none there was  
To carie all them ouer in conuenient space

Alas what hert may thynke / or tonge well expresse ?  
The dolorous greuaunce / and great lamentacion  
That the host made / for loue and tendernes  
Knowynge their great maister in suche persecucion  
Some wept and wayled without consolacion  
Some sighed and sobbed / some were in extasy  
Without perfect reason / alas what remedy ?

Wylliam the constable most carefull man on lyue  
Of his myfffortune in suche extreme necessite  
Called to hym a monke there dwelling contemplatyue  
Required hym for counsaile and prayer for his charite  
The monke exhorted hym to knele vpon his kne  
Humble to beseke Werburge his patronesse  
For helpe and remedy in suche great distresse



The constable content anone began to praye  
O blessed Werburge and virgin pure  
I beseeke the mekely helpe me this day  
That we may transcende this ryuer safe and sure  
To saue and defende my lorde from discomfiture  
And here I promytte to god and the alone  
To offre to the a gyfte at my comyng whome

Whiche prayer ended with wepyng and langour  
Beholde and consydre well with your gostly ee  
The infinite goodnes of our sauour  
For like as to Moyses deuided the redde see  
And the water of Jordan obeyed to Josue  
Ryght so the depe riuer of Dee made diuision  
The sondes dyde appered in syght of them echone

The constable consyderynge / and all the company  
This great myracle transcendyng nature  
Praised and magnified our lorde god almyghty  
And blessed Werburge the virgin pure  
They went into wales bpon the sondes sure  
Deliuered their lorde from drede and enmite  
Brought hym in safe garde agayne to Chestre cite

The sayd Wyllyam constable came to the monasterye  
Thanked saynt Werburge with meke supplicacion  
Fulfylled his promes made in extremitie  
Offred to the place the village of Neuton  
Afterwarde he founded the abbay of Norton  
And where the host passed / ouer betwix bondes  
To this day ben called the constable sondes

**H**owe Matild, countesse of Chestre counselleng her  
husband, agaynst the monastery of Chestre was drow-  
ned at Barlewe with many other mo. Cap. xix.

**A**fter the decesse of Hug. Lupe prenominate  
Richard, his son .vii. yeres of age  
Was elect Erle by the kyng and creat  
With counsaile gouerned his landes and heritage  
At yeres of discrecion he toke in mariage  
The lady Matild / nece to the first kyng Henry  
Doughter to erle Stephan (sayth the history)

At his begynnynge he was a benefactour  
A founder to the place by landes and possession  
By franchises and libertes / ayde / helpe / and succour  
Gyuen to the abbay / augmentynge the foundacion  
Proued by his actes of singular deuocion  
Enduryng long tyme / tyll that his lady  
By wycked counsaile moued hym the contrarpe

It is red in scripture howe quene Iesabell  
Ambitious of honour agaynst all ryghtousnes  
Peruerted her lorde Ahas / kyng of Israell  
To sle Nabath for his vineyard doubtles  
Also Athalia / the bible sheweth expresse  
Commaunded to sle the kynges children all  
That she myght regne sole pryncesse imperiall

Ryght so this Matild, clerely refusynge  
The steppes of Sara / Rebecca / and Rachell  
And other good matrons : but mutacion takynge  
Of these wycked women Athali and Iesabell



Peruerted her husbande by her subtyll counsell  
To aske of the abbot the maner place of Salton  
With the appurtinaunce by famous opinion

Thabbot by counsell of his bretherne all  
Denyed to graunt their propre possession  
The patrimony of Christ and their landes seuerall  
To the sayd erle Richarde and his succession  
Gyuen by his father at the first foundacion  
For whiche thyng the erle and Matild, his lady  
Hated thabbot / his bretherne / and the monastery

The erle and his countesse went to Normandy  
To viset their frendes and colyns naturall  
So dyd the princis / their father kyng Henry  
With many estates of the blodde riall  
These princis fauored no saxon at all  
The erle conominat in malice and hate  
Agaynst the monasterie / as a man endure

Satan sende forth his seruauntes in hast  
To enfect the erles hert with venomous poison  
The bedyls of Belial attempted full fast  
The erle and his countesse / to kepe theyr opinion  
Detractours flaterers cause of promocion  
Trusting therby to opteyne fauour and grace  
Excited their myndes agaynst the sayd place

The erle sore attempted by his goddly ennemy  
By wycked people calling hym vpon  
Namely by the counsell of Matild, his lady  
Entended to alter and chaunge the foundacion  
Werburge

Of the sayd abbay to a nother religion  
Confirmed the same sweryng most depely  
At his whom comyng to Englande / from Normandy

Chabbot and couent knowyng this great perell  
By speciall louers and frendes secretly  
Were pensyue and sorowfull (it was no meruell)  
Their hertes plunged in wo and misery  
By naturall reason hauyng no remedy  
Consydering his malice encreased more and more  
Agaynst the monastery / with wordes of rigour

They had their hope trust and confidence  
In blessed Werburge their patronesse  
With wepyng eies clere in conscience  
They called her bpon in all their distresse  
O glorious virgin lady and swete maistres  
Metigate the malice by thy benignite  
Of Richarde our lorde / mekely we praye the

Suffre hym neuer to dystrope thy place  
By wycked consell malice and enuy  
founded and dedicate by heuenly grace  
In honour of god / and the specially  
Protect / defende / and saue thy monastery  
Thy landes / thy libertes / and thy seruauntes all  
As thou afore tyme hast done continuall

In meane tyme the erle entended spedely  
From thens to depart / and retourne agayne  
To fulfyll his entent agaynst the monasterye  
By the subtyll mocion of his countesse playne



A ship was prepared / all thyng redy certayne  
The prince of England / the erle and his lady  
Toke shippynge at Barflewe and all their comp

Certaynly they sayled but a lytell space  
Whan agaynst them roose a contrarie wynde  
The mariners to gyde the ship had no grace  
The stormes so great hiduous agaynst kynde  
On a rocke they ranne / no remedy myght fynde  
Incontinently the ship barst all in sondre  
The erle and his feliship were turned all undre

No man ne childe scaped from deth that tyme  
But one pore seruaunt whiche swamme to the londe  
Suche was theyr fortune by sufferaunce diuyn  
Many of theyr bedis were neuer fonde  
Thus was their power made thral and bonde  
Theyr lyues were lost within a sort space  
Whiche were cruell ennemyes bnto her place

On saynt Katharins day at after mydnyght  
Whan matens were ended / and bretherne gon  
Some mournyng waylyng for drede full ryght  
Some busie in prayer and contemplacion  
Merburge appered to the secristan alone  
Sayenge : ye may be ioyfull in god and mery  
Erle Richarde is drowned your mortall ennemy

The same glad tidynge she wed an honest woman  
Tollyng at the churche dore the sayd day and hour  
As she was commaunded by Merburge incertan  
To thabbot and couent plunged in great langour  
Merburge. r.ii.

(Whiche myracle herde) they prayed our sauour  
And blessed Werburge / with hert deuoutly  
Syngyng Te deum full solemnly

**T** Howe a great fire like to distroye all Chestre by my-  
racle ceased / whan the holy shryne was borne about the  
towne by the monkes. Cap.xx.

**F**rom the incarnation of our sauour  
A thousand / a hundreth yere .lxxx. also  
On sonday in mydleton / the .viii. hour<sup>e</sup>  
Whan euery paretthen theyr churche went to  
As all christen people of dutie shulde do  
A fyre by infortune rose up sodeinly  
All flamying feruent or the people dyd espy

This fearefull fire encreased more and more  
Piteously wastyng hous / chambre / and hall  
The citezens were redy their cite to succour  
Shewed all their diligence / and labour continuall  
Some cried for water / and some for hookes dyd call  
Some bled other engins by crafte and policy  
Some pulled downe howses afore the fire truly

Other that were impotent / mekely gan praye  
Our blessed lorde / on them to haue pite  
Women and children cried out and waile a way  
Beholdyng the daunger and perill of the cite  
Prestes made hast diuine seruice to supple  
Redy for to succour their neyghbours in distres  
(As charite required) and helpe their heurnes



The fire continued without any cessyng  
feruently flamyng euer continuall  
from place to place meruaylously rennyng  
As it were tynder consumyng toure and wall  
The citezens sadly laboured in bayne all  
By the policie of man was founde no remedy  
To cesse the fire so feruent and myghty

Alas great heuynes it was to beholde  
The cite of Trope all flamyng as fire  
More pite of Rome cite was manyfolde  
feruently flagrant / empeiryng the empire  
As to the quantite the cite of Chestire  
Myght be assembled this tyme in like case  
To the sayd citees remedeles alas

Many riall places fell adowne that day  
Riche marchauntes houses brought to distruction  
Churches and chapels went to great decay  
That tyme was brent the more part of the towne  
And to this present day is a famous opinion  
Howe a myghty churche a mynstre of saynt Michaell  
That season was brent and to ruyne fell

When the people sawe their power insufficient  
By diligent labour / wysdome and policie  
To subdue the fire / but styll dyd augment  
To almyghty god they dyd call and crye  
And to saynt Werburge the gracious lady  
for helpe and succour in suche wretchednes  
Wepyng and waylyng for woo and heuynes  
Werburge.

Thabbot and couent of the sayd monasterie  
Religiously lyving in holy conuersacion  
Repleit with mekenes and feruent charite  
Toke the holy thynne in prayer and deuocion  
Syngyng the letanie bare it in procession  
Compasyng the fyre in euery strete and place  
Trustyng in Werburge for helpe aide and grace.

When they had ended the holy letanye  
From place to place procedyng in stacion  
Anone a stremyng sterre appered todaynlye  
A white doue descended afore the congregacion  
Approchyng as to helpe them / a signe of consolacion  
The people reioysed of that gostly syght  
And praysed saynt Werburge with power and myght

So by the merite of this blessed virgin  
The fire began to cesse / a myracle clere  
Nat passyng the place / where the holy thynne  
Was borne by the bretherne / as playnly dyd appere  
The citezens dyd helpe in their best manere  
The feruent great fire extincted was in dede  
By grace aboue nature / in story we may rede

The clergie the burges / and the comons all  
Consyderyng the goodnes of this virgin bright  
With tendernes of hert and loue in speciall  
Magnified and praysed our lord god almyght  
And blessed Werburge by day also nyght  
Whiche hath preserued of her great charite  
Chestre from distruction in extreme necessite



Unto her thyrne the people all went  
The clergie before in maner of proceſſion  
Thankyng this virgin with loue ſeruent  
For her mercy and grace ſhewed them vpon  
Deuoutly knelynge there made oblacion  
Sayeng full ſadly / we ſhall neuer able be  
The place to recompence for this dede of charite

**C**A breue reherſall of the myracles of ſaynt Werburge  
after her tranſlacion to Cheſtre. Cap. xxi.

**T**heſe foreſayd myracles and ſignes celeftiall  
By diuine ſufferaunce ſhewed manifeltly  
Magnifyen this virgin and bleſſed moyniall  
With mycle worthyp honour and victory  
Playnly declaryng bnto your memory  
What ſingular grace / worthyp / and excellence  
Our ſauour ſhewed for his ſpouſe openly  
As is reherſed at maſſe in her ſequens

To expreſſe all myracles wrytten in the place  
In a boke nominate the thrid paſſionarye  
It wolde require a longe tyme and ſpace  
To the reders tedious (no meruayle ſothly)  
Where we omytte to wrytte of them ſpecially  
But touched in generall bnto your audience  
To reioyce and comfort your hertes inwardly  
As ye may conſidre in her ſequens

Certaynly it is knowen by bokes expreſſe  
Sith that ſaynt Werburge came to Cheſtre cite  
By the power of god and myracle doutles  
Werburge. r. iiii.

She hath defended the towne from ennemite  
From barbarike nations full of crudelite  
Of whom we haue shewed with diligence  
Preseruyng her seruauntes / and the monastery  
As is declared in her true sequence

Also of her goodnes preserued she hase  
The sayd towne from fire in extreme necessite  
Many diuers tymes to their ioye and solace  
Releuyng the citezens in wo and penalite  
For it is well knowen by olde antiquite  
Sith the holy thryne came to their presence  
It hath ben their comfort and gladnes truly  
As playnly appereth in her sequens

Also to blynde men she hath gyuen syght  
To dombe men speche right perfectly  
To desse men their heryng pleasaunt and right  
And helth to sicke men repleit with debilitie  
Delyuered prisoners from captiuite  
Passage to lame men / to mad men intelligence  
Suche myracles shewed this blessed lady  
As ye may vnderstande in her sequens

Womē with childe by her had good delyueraunce  
Virgins defended from shame and bilany  
Her seruauntes were cured from wofull greuaunce  
Marchantes and mariners delyuered from ieopardye  
Other were saued from hangyng shamfully  
A speciall comfort succour and defence  
To all carefull creatures sekynge for remedy  
By singular grace / as sayth the sequens



No wofull person in payne and wretchednes  
Man woman childe / who so euer they be  
Comynge to the abbay with perfit mekenes  
Makynge supplicacion to this ladye free  
But they departed ioyful and merie  
To theyr dwellynge place by her beniuolence  
And for their lyuyng had all thyng necessarie  
As written is playnly in her sequens

for whiche great myracles and signes continuall  
This blessed Werburge floure of humilite  
Of the people is called for grace supernall  
Patrones of Chestre / protectrice of the countre  
Where next our sauour and his mother Marie  
She hath great honour prayse and preeminence  
As most condigne to beare the principalite  
In witnes wherof recordeth her sequens

This holy abbasse and lady imperiall  
Hath ben president in Chestre monasterie  
Theyr trust / theyr treasure / and defence speciall  
In mycle reuerence .vii. hundreth yere trulie  
And so shall continue by grace of god almyghty  
To the worldes ende in hie magnificence  
To whom be honour worship and glorie  
Euer to endure / as sayth her sequens

**C**A charitable mocion and a desyre to all the inhaby-  
tauntes within the countie palatine of Chestre for the  
monasterie.

Cap. xxii.

**O** ye worthye nobles of the west partye  
Considre in your mynde with hye discrecion  
The perfite goodnes of this swete ladye  
We mean saynt Werburge nowe at this season  
Whiche hath ben your helpe and singular tuicion  
And so euer wylbe / haue this in your mynde  
When ye to her call with humble supplicacion  
Wherefore to the monasterye be neuer unkynde

Remembre / at the foundation of the sayd place  
your predeceffours and foresathers redy were  
To gyue for their soule helth by singular grace  
Parcell of their landes and possessions mere  
To our sauour and to saynt Werburge clere  
Redy to offre them with humble hert and mynde  
In perfite oblacion with Hug. Lupe their foundere  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Many helde their landes of the sayd monasterie  
By tenure grand seriant / and some by homage  
By tenur<sup>e</sup> franke almoigne / other by fealtie  
With seruice de chiualer<sup>e</sup> / and some by escuage  
Some by petit seriant / and by tenur<sup>e</sup> burgage  
As in their euidentes and grauntes they may fynde  
Tres maners de rentes / with tenur<sup>e</sup> billenage  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

The place hath speciall franchises and liberte  
Hauynge certayne wardes of landes and mariage  
Of diuers gentilmen within the sayd counte  
All theyr tenauntes and seruauntes haue fre passage  
Within all cheshire without tolle and pillage



Suche auncient fredoms in their dedes they fynde  
Gyuen by theyr founders for goostly auauntage  
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

The erle gabe the place many great fredoms  
Within Chestre cite / whiche ben knowen of olde  
With singular priuileges and auncient customs  
Saynt Werburge faire / with profites manyfolde  
That no marchandise shulde be bought ne solde  
Enduryng the faire days (in writyng as we fynde)  
But afore thabbay gate / to haue and to holde  
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Therfore lordes barons / ye rulers of the countre  
We you now exhorte in our sauour  
Discretly conside with your goostlie eie  
The myght of this mayden and chaste floure  
She wed by myracles euery day and hour  
Whan she was required with true hert and mynde  
In all busines she hath ben their protectour  
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Whan your forefathers haue ben in great perell  
In ieoperdie of lyfe on see and on londe  
Or like to be slayne by ennemies in batell  
Or taken by warr<sup>e</sup> in prison fast bonde  
Unto this birgin / as we understonde  
Whan they called and cryed with contrite mynde  
They escaped all daunger / cam whom safe and sonde  
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Marchauntes passyng with marchaundise

From lande to lande truly entendyng  
If they were taken with cruell ennemyse  
Or els were put in perill of perisshyng  
If they to this birgin deuoutly praying  
Made supplicacion with humble hert and mynde  
Anone they opteyned theyr humble askyng  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

If any of you be red with infirmite  
With sekenes incurable / or other vexacion  
As wronges iniuries and other maladie  
Unto saynt Werburge makyng intercession  
And to her place promysyng an oblacion  
With contrite hert and penitent mynde  
They were soone cured from all affliction  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

And you honest matrons remembre you all  
The goodnes of this birgin full of grace  
When ye in trauelyng vpon her do call  
Or haue any relique sende from the place  
Ye fortune and spede well in short tyme and space  
And diuers maydens louyng a chaste mynde  
From vilany ben saued by her purchase  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

But eche contray / shire / and congregacion  
Some be disposed to vertues generall  
And some to the contrarie proued by reason  
Following their mynde and appetite sensuall  
Haue shewed unkyndnes to the place spirituall  
And haue ben sore punysshed / take this in mynde



To all other folowynge and example speciall  
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer unkynde

Ther<sup>e</sup> was neuer man of high nor lowe degree  
Lorde / baron / knyght / marchaunt / and burges  
Attemptyng to infringe their rightes and liberte  
Remaynyng in the same malice and wychednes  
But if they repent shortly theyr busynes  
Askyng absolucion to theyr conscience blynde  
Vengeance on them doth lyght doutles  
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer unkynd

Diuers malefactours agayne good conscience  
Attemptyng to take there seuerall possession  
By subtell policy and wrong feyned euidens  
By proued periury and fals collusion  
Whiche in theyr iniury and wronge mesprision  
Without repentauns in theyr consciens blynde  
Sodenly haue ben drowed a sharpe punycion  
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer unkynde

Other haue be glad to alienat the patronage  
Of certayne churches by malice and enuy  
By a fals enquest for theyr owne auantage  
Defraudyng the right of the holy monastery  
Suche euill doers remaynyng in theyr tyranny  
Without satisfaccion in their consciens blynde  
Lyke wretches expired moste myserably  
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer unkynde

Other haue ben besy serching day and nyght  
To infringe theyr fraunchis and fridome auncient

By fals recordes oppugnant to ryght  
As hath ben proued by persones indifferent  
yet they haue procured and sought wronge iugement  
Agaynst their libertes in conscience blynde  
Sodayne and euyl deth folowed them consequent  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Some other haue be paraenture on late  
Studious to disquiet the place the company  
And diuers libertes haue alienate  
Also tolled their franchis fraudulently  
From the sayd place well knowen in memory  
Suche mysdoers we moue in conscience blynde  
To maende their wronges lest payne come sodeynly  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Suche malefactours confidre nat discretly  
Howe all suche landes libertes and fredoms  
Were gauen to Christ and ben his patrimonye  
And nat allonly to religious persons  
For all suche fraunches priuileges possessions  
Of charite were gauen of pure conscience and mynde  
To god and saynt Werburge with great deuocions  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Powe for to make a small conclusion  
We well perceyue in auncient bokes olde  
All suche transgressours / holdyng their opinion  
Obstinate in malice indurate and bolde  
Some haue ben slayne / some drowned in water colde  
Some shamfully hanged rebukyng their kynde  
Some wretchedly departed / some cruciat manyfolde  
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde



**A** litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine saynte  
Merburge by the translatour of this werke. Ca.xxiii.

**O** Blessed Merburge and virgin glorious  
Descended by auncetrie of blod victoriall  
Doughter to kyngc Aulfer<sup>e</sup> / and Omenild<sup>e</sup> vertuous  
O sufferayne lady and famous moyniall  
With hert and true mynde on the I call  
Thou art my succour / my helpe in all distres  
Defende and saue me from peynes infernall  
By thy meke prayer swete patrones

O rutilant gemme clerer than the cristall  
O redolent rose repleit with suauite  
Whiche for the loue of thy spouse eternall  
Refused hast all bayne pleasures transetore  
Honours / riches / and secular dignite  
Nowe regnyng in heuyn as a quene doutles  
Praye for thy seruaunt to the lorde of mercy  
Meke I beseeke the swete patronesse

O sufferayne lady full of singular vertue  
Mayndyng most religion from thy infancy  
Elect to the a spouse our sauour Jesu  
Professed obedience at the house of Ely  
Where thou obserued the sensuall thre  
By grace aboue nature playn to expresse  
Optyne me power to haue victory  
Ageynst myn ennemyes swete patrones

O floure of birgins and comly creature  
Syngyng with angels in the heuenly toure

Transcendyng the saphir and diamounde pure  
In worship praisyng beaute and decur  
What tong can reherse thy ioy and honour  
Whiche is ineffable for man to expresse  
Beseeke thy spouse our blessed sauour  
To graunte me mercy swete patrones

For thy great vertu and hie discrecion  
Chosen thou was a pyler here to be  
Of diuers monasteryes to encrease religion  
By thy gostly doctryne and humilite  
Exsample thou gaue of perfit charite  
Unto thi subgettis as a kynde maistres  
Helpe me thy seruaunt of thy benigne  
To please my maker swete patrones

No maruell it was thought thy subgettis all  
Were vertuouse and perfect in contemplacion  
Under suche a ruler a hed and principall  
Whose gostly example and exortation  
Were corespondent accordyng in one  
Thy precept and deed were vnit with mekenes  
In this bale misery be my protection  
I humble the require swete patrones

Glorious abbasse and floure of chastite  
Carbondle shenyng bothe day and nyght  
All this region by thy noble progenie  
And hy the is decorat vnder god almyght  
The presens of thy blessed body right  
Reioisith thy seruauntis in all distres  
Thou art our refuge and lanterne of light



Succour thy seruauntes swete patrones

O pereles princes lady imperiall  
O gemme of holynes and noble president  
Comfort to all creatures in paynes thrall  
Releuyng all secke feble and impotent  
A myrroure of mekenes to euery pacient  
Whose myracles magnifyen thy great goodnes  
Defende thy seruaunt from greuous turment  
By thy supplicacion swete patronesse

O noble sufferayne and singular protectrice  
Of thy true subiectes by speciall grace  
In all necessite a sure mediatrice  
From greuous oppression preseruyng thy place  
A lanterne of lyght in eche wofull case  
To illumine thy people plunged in heuynes  
With great consolacion and gostly solace  
Howe lyghten our conscience swete patronesse

Swete louely lady mekely I the praye  
For thy great mekenes and perfect charite  
Make thou intercession both nyght and day  
For thy true seruauntes vnto the trinite  
That we may opteyne here grace and mercy  
And of our synne to haue forgyuenes  
Afterwarde to come to eternall glorie  
Helpe nowe and euer swete patronesse

A breue cōclusion of this litell werke vnto the reders  
by the translatour.

Merburge

Cap.xxiiii.  
f.i.

With tremblinge penne and hand full of drede  
In termes rude translate nowe haue we  
The noble hystorie of saynt Werburge in dede  
Besekyng all them for their good humanite  
Whiche this litell proces shall beholde and se  
For to adde and minishe and cause reformation  
Where nede requireth after your discrecion

At her lyfe historiall example may take  
Euery great estate / quene / duchess / and lady  
To encrease in vertue / and synne to forsake  
To obserue mekenes and prayer deuoutly  
With pacience of hert / and almesdede truly  
If thou be widowe / her lyfe well folowynge  
Thou mayst be sure in blis to haue a wonnyng

If thou be religious / wearyng blacke besture  
Take good example at this holy abbasse  
Her lyfe wyl teche the how thou shalt endure  
In holy religion / opteynyng mycle grace  
With mekenes / meditacion / mesure in eche place  
And howe thou shalt kepe thy sensuall thre  
Consideryng in heuen thy rewarde to be

If thou be a virgin of hie or low degre  
Takyng imitacion of this virgin bright  
Thou mayst well obserue the floure of chastite  
And thy spouse shalbe the lorde most of myght  
On whom if thou attende redy day and nyght  
Thou shalt haue merite as recordeth scripture  
With .v. wise virgins after thy departure



The cause mouyng vs this werke to begyn  
It was to auoyde slooth and idelnes  
And most for the loue of this holy birgin  
Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones  
As for baudy balades full of wretchednes  
And wanton wylde gestis / we purpose none to make  
For drede of losyng tyme / clothed in besture blake

Go forth litell boke / Jesu be thy spede  
And saue the alway from mysreportyng  
Whiche art compiled for no clerke in dede  
But for marchaunt men / hauyng litell lernyng  
And that rude people therby may haue knowyng  
Of this holy birgin / and redolent rose  
Which hath ben kept full longe tyme in close

To all auncient poetes litell boke submytte the  
Whilom flouryng in eloquence facundious  
And to all other / whiche present now be  
Fyrst to maister Chaucer / and Ludgate sentencious  
Also to preignaunt Barkley / nowe beyng religious  
To inuentiue Skelton and poet laureate  
Praye them all of pardon both erly and late

If there be any thyng within this litell boke  
Pleasaunt to the audience / contentyng the mynde  
We praye all reders / whan they thereon do loke  
To gyue thanks to god maker of mankynde  
Nat to the translatour ignoraunt and blynde  
For euery good dede / done in any cost  
It cometh allonly of the holy gost.

Merburge.

C.ii.

Almyghty god both one two and thre  
We desire the with humble supplicacion  
Saue holy churche of thy benigne  
And all ministres in holy religion  
Preserue the kyngis grace the Peeris the region  
Defende our monasterie and thy seruantes all  
And graunt vs by grace to come to blis eternall  
Finis.

A balade to the auctour.

O thou disciple of Cully most famous  
Nowe flourishyng in the floures of glorious eloquēce  
Like as appereth by your stile facundius  
Full worthe laude prayse and preeminence  
Put forth your werkes full sure of sentence  
Whose auctour / what though vncertayne be his name  
Of all the reders exalted shalbe in fame

Alas why shulde this delicious werke  
Thus surely sette by pured science  
To be examined by my rudenes all derke  
Whiche knowe full well myn insufficiēce  
Sith I haue lerned by longe experience  
That dulled age in werkes of poetry  
Must nedes gyue to poetes place and victory

Glorious god and kyng eternall  
We magnifie thy name as is but ryght  
Sith thou gaue to vs a floure most riall  
Redolent in cronicles with historicall syght  
Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght  
The present pere of this translacion  
M.D.xiii. of Christis incarnation  
*Cutus anime propicietur deus.*



An other balade.

O frutefull hystore / o digne memoriall  
Enbawmed with doctrine of vertues infinite  
With termes exquisid / and sence rectoriall  
To spirituall hertes a singular delite  
Fragrant and facunde / of englishe exquisite  
Holsome in doctrine / for those that it desire  
Auaunce you to rede it / for it is exquisite  
Folowyng the effect to kepe you from hell fire

Reioyse Chestre / reioyse ye religious  
And thanke your maker of his beniuolence  
That hath you gyuen suche treasure precieuse  
Aduocatrice / in your most indigence  
O virgin werburge / of double excellence  
Conserue thy seruauntes dayly familier  
Preseruyng them from inconuenience  
The for tensue / that art theyr lode sterre

Amonges the whiche to thyn honour  
One of thy clientes / with morall retorique  
Hath chaunged newly / o mayde most swete flour  
Thy legende latine / to our language publique  
Preserue his soule / and make hym domestique  
Within the heuyns / in whiche that thou art sonke  
With deth preuent / he myght nothyng replique  
Harry Bradethaa of Chestre abbay monke

O cruell deth / o thesse vindicatyfe  
To persons vertuous ennemy mortall  
Of this good clerke thou hast abbregeed the lyfe  
Preuentyng hym with thy dede stronge fatall

yet in despite of thy most venomous gall  
He hath translate this legende profitable  
And left it for holsome memoriall  
To all his sequaces / a gyft most couenable

With polysthed termes / and good sence litterall  
No place there boyde / but vertue aboundeth  
The effect is manifest : for science ouer all  
Rethorically thy sentence groundeth  
All vices surely it confoundeth  
Shewyng the legende of this mayde pure  
Her shewyng lyfe eche where redoundeth  
Suche steppes folowyng / we hope in them tendure

An other balade to saynt werburge  
With hert contrite accepte my supplicacion  
Apyng my fraylete and lyfe vacillaunt  
Renegate and contumace in all obstinacion  
Bewrapt with all synne / detestable and recreaunt  
Toughsafe to supplie Jesu and geat graunt  
Remysion to haue of my synnes generall  
Greuous and thrall / that I may the auaunt  
A gentill Werburge / to thy doctrine me call

Wherefore thy father / thy mother Ermenild,  
Enclined both to dedes catholique  
Ruffine and Kenrede / thy bretherne were fulfild,  
Both with great grace / through martyrdome both like  
With diuers of thy kynne magnifiquie  
Redact in the catholique papall  
Geat me suche grace to boyde all synnes inique  
And gentill Werburge to thy doctrine me call



With faithfull clemmes / thy soule was sure preserved  
Euer contynuyng in doctrine celicall  
Refusyng vanite / from vertue neuer swarued  
But in all grace remaynyng principall  
Unto thy deth exhortyng great and small  
Ruled to be / to the preceptes diuine  
Gouerned by grace / were thy disciples all  
A gentill Werburge call me to suche doctrine

Wordly felicitye abiect from my courage  
Envy and pride / with lustes holuptuous  
Rancorous cupidite myn hert sore do aswage  
Byng oyntmentes sanatiue for my sores dolorous  
Unclose thy succours / and be beniuolous  
Redy to be preseruyng me from pyne  
Gouerne my lyfe from all actes daungerous  
And gentill Werburge call me to thy doctrine

Be nowe beniuolent / whan I shall on the call  
Unto thy slaue / as my trust hath ben sure  
Leue vnto me for a memoriall  
Knowlege effectuall of thy lyfe pure  
Lyuyng ther after / and so tendure  
Euer in purite my lyfe to contynue  
yeldyng thanks for thy most holosome lure  
Christ ouer vs holde his hande / al vices teschue. Amē.

**A**nd thus endeth the lyfe and historye of saynt Wer-  
burge. Imprinted by Richarde Pynson / printer to the  
kynges noble grace / With priuilege to hym graunted  
by our souerayne lorde the kyng. A°. M. D. xxi.





**GLOSSARY.**

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**INDEX.**





## GLOSSARY.

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This Glossary is not intended so much to explain, as to exhibit in a tabular form those words now nearly obsolete which were in use at the time the poem was written.

### A.

ACCEPTRE, accepted, 80.  
 ADRED, alarmed, 160.  
 AGO, agone, gone, 116.  
 ALBE, (tunic ?) a white vesture ordered to be worn by the clergy in administering the eucharist, 154.  
 ALIENAT, alienated, 203, 204.  
 ALLONLY, all only, only, 174, 204, 209.  
 AMPLIAT, enlarged, 148.  
 ANENDES, anent, in reference to, 100.  
 AT AFTER, after, 95, 193.  
 ATTEMPTED, tempted, 191.  
 ATTEMPTEN, plural of attempt, 100.  
 AUDACITY, courage, 2.

### B.

BEFOUND, found, 8.  
 BEN, be, are, 1, 75, 111, 117, 134, 151, 186, 189, 202, 204.  
 BENESON, benediction, 90.  
 BESEKE, beseech, 189.  
 BESELY, busily, 1.  
 BESYNES, business, 2.  
 BORDE, "high board lord," those seated at the upper table at a feast, 60.  
 BOTH TWO, both the one and the other, 15, 57, 58.  
 BOWNE, bent, prepared, 162.  
 BRENNED, burned, 34, 39, 49, 139, 141.

BRENT, burnt, 60.  
 BRUTES, uncivilised people, 149, 152.  
 BROWDRED, embroidered, 60.  
 BUXUM, obedient, 1.  
 BYFORNE, before, 38.

### C.

CADUCE, frail, feeble, 115, 118.  
 CANABY, canopy, 146.  
 CARLE, churl, clown, 38.  
 CELEBRATE, celebrated, 146, 181.  
 CELICALL, heavenly, 213.  
 CEMETERIE, 151, 184.  
 CESSE, to stop, verb act. 195.  
 CHERE, countenance, 102.  
 CHEST, coffin, 125.  
 CIRCUMFULCED, surrounded by brightness, 76, 150, *circumfulgeo*.  
 CLERKE, educated persons, 4, 209.  
 CLYPPE, called, 32.  
 COMEN, plur. of come, 128, 144.  
 COMPULACYON, computation, 5.  
 CONDIGNE, worthy, 199.  
 CONGREGATE, congregated, 188.  
 CONOMINAT, akin, 191.  
 CONSECRATE, consecrated, 93.  
 CONYNGE, skill, 134.  
 CORONATE, crowned, 115, 144, 147, 158, 175, 176, 181.  
 CORPORACE, corporate, a linen cloth spread under the chalice and paten at the eucharist, 154.

## GLOSSARY.

COST, charge, also, side, 177, 182.  
 COSTY, a son coté, on his side, 164.  
 COSYNS, kinsmen generally, 25, 170, 171, 191.  
 COTIDIAN, daily, 80, 143.  
 COUNCEYLED, concealed, 45.  
 COUNTERED, encountered, 9.  
 COVETYSE, covetousness, 2.  
 CREATE, created, 2, 190.  
 CREATURE, creator, 1, &c. &c.  
 CRUCIATE, tormented, 101, 166, 204.  
 CRUELITY, cruelty, 198.  
 CUBICLE, bedchamber, 1, 77.  
 CUP, "to sit between the cup and the wall," probably a common term for a drunkard, 2.  
 CURE, a care or charge; as of a parish, &c. 54, 87, 107.

### D.

DAN, master. 185, 186, from Dominus.  
 DARING, suffering pain, 98, from dare, pain. *Bailey's Dict.*  
 Dredefully daringe, i. e. slinking along for fear, as if they would hide themselves, from view.  
 "The dere, in the dellun,  
 They droupen and daren."  
*Anturs of Arthur at the Tarnewathelun.*  
 "In this dale I droupe and dare.  
 For dern dedes that done me dere."—*Minst.*  
 "Now or thai darend all for drede,  
 That war before so stout and gay."—*Ibid.*  
 "Blotir," to squat, skowke, ly close to the ground like a daring larke, or af-frighted fowle.—*Cotgrave.*  
 DECORATE, decorated, 75, 96, 120, 126, 206.  
 DECAUR, 146, decur, 206, honour.  
 DEDICATE, dedicated, 104.  
 DEPAYRED, decayed, 125, deperir, *Fr.* dis-perdere, *Lat.*

DEROGATION, damage, 173.  
 DESCRIBEN, plur. of describe, 8.  
 DESCRIPCION, for destruction, 97.  
 DESIDERY, desire, 56, 108.  
 DESSE, high desse, seat of state, 61.  
 DEVOYRE, devoir, respect, 25, 58, 126.  
 DIGHT, clothed, 144.  
 DOLOUR, grief, 167.  
 DO WAY, begone, put aside, 67, 83.  
 DONE, plur. of do, 67.  
 DYFFERRE, defer, delay, 30.  
 DYONE, worthy, 109, 152, 211.  
 DYLATED, magnified, published, 9, 75, 96, 150, 168.  
 DYLECTACYON, delight, 27, 155.  
 DYSPENT, spent, 94.  
 DYVERSITY, dissension, 89.  
 DYVYDENT, dividing, 8, 10.

### E.

EDIFIED, built, from edifier, *Fr.* 151, 153, 158, 177.  
 ELECTE, elected, 85, 93, 159, 190.  
 ELEVATE, raised up, 48, 125, 126, 161.  
 EMPAIRED, injured, 160.  
 EMPEIRYNG, inflaming? 195.  
 ENDURATE, hardened, cruel, 159, 191.  
 ENFORCE, strengthen, 34.  
 ENORMENTES, ornaments, 154, 156, 165, 180, 184.  
 ENOWNED, inurned, environed, 127.  
 ENQUIRED, for required, 80.  
 ENSUING, pursuing, 41; during, 177.  
 EQUIPOLENT, of equal power, 11.  
 EQUIVALENT, proportional, 167.  
 EXPULSE, expel, 6, 88, 111, 121, 142, 151, 152, 177.  
 EXTINGCTED, extinguished, 196.

### F.

FACUNDE, 211.  
 FACUNDIOUS, eloquent, 209, 210.



## GLOSSARY.

FEMINITY, womanhood, 61.

FERE, 76; in fere, 11, 59, 164, together in company. See Chaucer, *Cant. Tales*, v. 4748, 4814. Ang. S. *fœra, fera, socius*.

FERRE, far, 63.

FISNAMY, physiognomy, 103, 126.

FLOURES OF EXPERIENCE, of approved worth, 5.

FLOURYNGE, flourishing, 9, 23, 34, 135, 181, 209.

FOLLOWEN, follow, 97.

FRAGYLL, light, vain, 81, 103.

FRAGLYTE, light conduct, 69.

FRAYLTE, inconstancy of mind, 3.

### G.

GALWAY SCOT, Scotch from Galloway, 173.

GALWEDY, Galloway, from mediæval Latin word, *Gallovidia*, 162.

GATE, road, at no gate, no where, by no means, 89.

— got, begot, 11, 12, 13, 14, 91, 118.

GAUNTES, Gannets, or any geese, 97, 98.

GEAF, perhaps from gavel, progenies masculine; vide Skinner in *voc. forens*. Geaf therefore seems here to mean male descendant; of his eldest son Shem descending plain, i. e. in Saxon's tongue, geaf, 14.

GEAT, get, 212.

GLEBE, earth, soil, 9; vital glebe, mortal body, 129.

GOET, Goths, 173.

GOTES, Goths, 140, 162. Goets and Gotes, being used in connection with Danes, probably means Goths; but as they are also used with Galway and Galwedy, they may refer to the Manxmen, who at one time possessed Galloway.

GRAFFE, graft, shoot, 75.

GUERDON, recompence, deserts, 84.

### H.

HAD UPON, placed upon, 49.

HALLYNGE, aulæum, hangings, 61; "An hallynge, auleum, anabatrū, *Versus*. Vela vel aulæa cortinæ sunt anabatra." *Catholicon anglicanum MS.* Dict. inedited, dated 1483.

HALL, usually a large tent for warlike uses, seems to mean the complete set of hangings for a chamber. Thus Margery Argentein in 1427 bequeaths "a steyned hall."—*Rokewode's Suffolk*, p. 290.

HARNEYS, armour, 9.

HASE, have or hast, 117, &c.

HE, for she, 23.

HOLLY, holily, 95.

HUMANYTE, courtesy, 25.

HYGHT, named, 15, 16.

HISTORIAL, historical, 10, 15, 208.

### I.

ICHE, each, 112.

IERARCHYSES, Hierarchies, 61, 115.

INFORTUNE, misfortune, 194.

INSTRUCTE, instructed, 75.

IN SYGHT, in presence, 83, 161.

INTERIOUSLY, internally, 183.

JUTES, people of Jutland, 6.

### K.

KYNDE, course of Kynde, course of nature, 98, 106, 193.

### L.

LAD, one of low condition. Lad to wed a lady is inconvenient, 38.

LAYTH, probably lightening, akin to laye, or lowe, a flame, 138.

## GLOSSARY.

LEED, laid, buried, 19.  
 LENT, dwelling, abiding, Sax. word, Lenge.  
     to dwell, 98, 119.  
 LETTEN, let, permitted, 183.  
 LETTYNGE, obstructing, 187.  
 LEVE YE ME, believe me, 32, 84.  
 LEVER, rather, preferred, 76.  
 LOSE, destroy, 39.  
 LOVERS, friends, 47.  
 LUSTY eloquence, vigorous, 37.  
 LYCENSE, leave, farewell, 65, 78, permis-  
     sion, 6, 36, 43, 99; 136, 152, 158, 186.  
 LYGHTNESSE, nimble, quick, 114.  
 LYST, like, desire, 135.  
 LYEN, plur. of lye, 11.

### M.

MACHORYTE, anchorite, 103.  
 MACULATE, defiled, 104, 126.  
 MAGNIFIEN, magnify, 169, 197, 207.  
 MAKEN, make, 134.  
 MARGARYTE, pearl, or flower, daisy, 16.  
 MAY, maiden, young woman, 27.  
 MEAN, intercession, 172. "Meene, or me-  
     dyatowre, *mediator*."—*Prompt. Parv.*  
     "Woman that is meane for any man.  
     advocatte.—*Palsgrave*.  
 MEDE, reward, 13, 17, 18.  
 MEDLED, mingled inconveniently, 117.  
 MEMORALL, memorable, 8.  
 MEMORATIVE, memorable, 41, 153.  
 MEMOROUS, memorable, 6, 11, 104, 185.  
 MENDKS, amends, 47.  
 MERCYABLE, pitiful, 95, 102, 175.  
 MINISSE, diminish, 208.  
 MONYALL, recluse, nun. 4, 81, 115, 145,  
     168, 197, 205; monialis, *Lat.* moniale,  
     *Fr.*  
 MOYNES, nun, 55, 59, 68, 80, 93, 130;  
     moinesse, *old Fr.*  
 MUTATION, taking the contrary course, 190.  
 MYCLE, much, great, 144, 145, 146, 153,  
     157, 172, 174, &c.  
 MYNYSTERS, servants, waiters, 64, 94.

### N.

NAT, not, 135, &c. &c.  
 NAY, it is no nay, there is no denying it,  
     134.  
 NE, nor, 54, 83, 100, 102, 117, 148.  
 NOMINATE, named, 20, 22, 87, 88, 93,  
     &c. &c.  
 NOMYNYON, nomination, mention, 7.

### O.

OBSERVEN, plur. of observe, 1.  
 ODIBLE, odious, 138.  
 OR, before, 95, 169, 172, 194.  
 ORDINANCE, direction, preparation, 62.  
 ORELS, or else, 36, 38, 147, 202.  
 OUT OF PRESENCE, out of sight, 41.

### P.

PARAGE, parentage, 69.  
 PARESSHEN, parishioners, 194.  
 PASSING, surpassing, 23, 27.  
 PAYNYMS, pagans, 140, 141.  
 PAYNT, flatter, 2.  
 PENALITY, punishment, 174, 198.  
 POLLERS, plunderers, 89.  
 POLLUTE, defiled, 129.  
 POLLYNGE, pillaging, 139.  
 POLYTYKE, sagacious, 20.  
 PRENOMINATE, forenamed, 139, 190.  
 PREORDINATE, predestined, 143.  
 PREPARAT, prepared, 1, 62, 114.  
 PREPOTENT, very powerful, 14, 76, 182.  
 PRETENDED, foreshewed, portended, 28.  
 PROGENY, progenitors, 38.  
 PROLONGING, postponing, 33.  
 PROMISSION, permission, 129.  
 PROMYTTE or promyt, promise, 178, 189.  
 PROMYTTYNGE, 163, 166.  
 PROMOTERS, informers, 89.  
 PRYCE, prize, preeminence, 9.



## GLOSSARY.

PRYME, daybreak, 40.  
 PRYMATE, supreme governor, 1, 4.  
 PUDICAL, chaste, modest, 142.  
 PULCHRYTUDE, 30.  
 PYGHT, pitched, set up, 162, 181.  
 PYNE, sorrow, 213.  
 PYNNE, confine, 98. "Pynnyne, or put  
 yn a pynfold, intrudo, detrudo." *Prompt.*  
*parv.* Ang. Sax. pyndan, includere.

### R.

RECIDIVATION, relapse, 150.  
 RECOURSED, ran back again, 42.  
 REDACT, 212, from redactus, collected;  
 gathered into the general body.  
 REFUTED, rejected, cast aside, 57.  
 REGALY, regality, royalty, 16.  
 RELIQUE, 121, 124, 127, 143, 144, 146,  
 153, 202.  
 REMANENT, remaining, 152.  
 REPAELED, repaired, 180.  
 RESEMBLED, reassembled, 119.  
 RESOLUTION, decay, resolving to original  
 state, 123, 125, 129.  
 RESOLVE, dissolve, melt, 54, 129, 130, 142.  
 REVESSHED, revested, clothed again, 127.  
 REWARNED, rewarded, 84.  
 ROBORATE, corroborate, confirm, 91.  
 ROWME, place, rank, 56.  
 RUDE, uneducated, 127.  
 RUTILANT, glittering, brilliant, 128, 145,  
 205.  
 RYVED, rife, frequent, 140.  
 RYDDE, quit, relieved from, 109.

### S.

SAD, saad, sayd. Sedate, discrete, 2, 23,  
 24, 27, 29, 38, 69, 81, 149, 155, 173.  
 SADNESS, discretion, 51, 57, 69.  
 SANCTYMONYAL, holy person, 96.  
 SAPPYENTLY, wisely, 37.

SAUTYNGE, assaulting, 163.  
 SAYNE, plur. of say, 14.  
 SEGREGATE, separated, 159.  
 SENDE for sent, 10, 148, 149, 152, 156,  
 165, 183, 188, 202.  
 SENSUALS, essentials, 205, 208.  
 SEQUACES, successors, 212.  
 SEQUENS, 197. The name of a particular  
 kind of service book. Lat. med. Se-  
 quentiarius, sequentialis. "Sequences."  
 were chanted between the lessons at  
 mass.

"Fist mainte sequeance et mainte hymne."

SEYN, Sitting, Synod, 90.  
 SHALMES, musical instrument, 63.  
 SOTHE, truth, 2.  
 SPYRE, spike, tendril, 60. Corn spires  
 when the flowers are forming. "Spyre  
 of corne or herbe, hastula."—*Prompt.*  
*Parv.* "Spyre of corne, barbe du ble."  
 —*Palsgrave.*  
 In the Wicliffe version, Isaiah 35 7.  
 "Grenenesse of rehed and spier schal  
 growe in dennes in whiche dwelliden  
 dragouns bifor" and Isai. 18. 2. "Pa-  
 pirus is a kynde of spier so great that  
 bokis mowen be maid thereof." In a  
 curious treatise on herbs, &c. Arund.  
 MS. 42. "Pliny says, c. 81. ther is  
 calamus scriptoris, swuche a stable as  
 scryueners writen with, and that is a  
 reed spere; for by olde tyme, ar us of  
 penne were fowndyn men wryten with  
 reedspyre, &c. p. 55. 6.

STABLE, steady, firm, 27, 32.  
 STREKTS, the milky way, 28: In German  
 it is termed "die Milch-strasse"—as  
 Phœbus surpassed other planets or stars,  
 so doth, &c. perhaps, however, the  
 word is a misprint for "starres."  
 STUDY, "stode styll in a study," mused in  
 perplexity, was in a brown study, 98.  
 SUFFERAUNT, suffering, patient, 92.

## GLOSSARY.

SUING, ensuing, following, 61.

SUPERNALL, from above, 41.

SUPPLE HER ROWME, supply her place, 93.

SUPPLIE, supplicate, 212.

SURGES, wax tapers, 144, 154, Fr. *cierges*, "cereus cereolus, serge." Vocab. Lat. Eng. Roy. MS. ix. c. xvii. "Ceroferarius, a bearer of serge." Harl. MS. 2257.

SYKERNESSE, security, 50.

SYTH, since, 4.

### T.

TAMYSMOUTH, mouth of Thames, 139.

THRALL, bondage, 99, 113, 115, 117, 193, 207, 212.

— v. imprisoned, 115, 183.

THO, those, 25, 58.

TIMOROUS, occasioning alarm, 162.

TOLLYNG, knocking, pulling, 193.

TORTUOUS, torturing, 171.

TOYNES, tunes, (Prologue of J. T.)

TRANSCEND, pass over, 189.

TRANSLACYON, removal, 124, 128, 146, 159, 185.

TRANSLATED, removed, 11, 79, 124, 128, 153, 157, 181. converted, changed, 48, 49, 86, 97.

TRAYNE, trap, 39, 43.

TROW YE, think ye, 83.

TUYCYON, government, 5, 51. protection, 111, 136, 145.

TUMYLATE, buried, 26, 108, 126, 158.

TWYN, tine, loss, sorrow, 160.

### U.

UNKNOWNINGE, unknown, 99.

UNKYNDE, unnatural, unhealthy, 167.

UNNETH, scarcely, 46. Saxon adv.

URE, use, 64 ; Ure for use occurs in writers about the age of Bradshaw.

USING HIM, conducting himself, 87.

### V.

VALEAUNCE, valour, 9.

VARNAUNT, verdant, 23, 104, 129.

VENARE, VENERY, hunting, 8, 149.

VENGEABLE, revengeful, 39.

VERAY, verily, 100.

VIRGINALL, virginlike, 23, 68, 110.

VOLUPTÉ, voluptuousness, 81.

VYLAYNE PEOPLE, of no rank, 36, 38.

### W.

WANDELES, Vandals, 140.

WETE, know, 82.

WIS, e wis, I know, 156.

WHOME, home, 189, 192, 201.

WHYLOM, formerly, 3, 4, 20, 21, 117, 136, 147, 209. Idleness whylom, former idleness, 3.

WODELY, madly, 163.

WOO, woe begone, sorrowful, 68.

WROKEN, from wreke, revengeful, 39.

### Y.

YCHEON, each one, 113.

YERLE, early, 165.

YLNES, evil, or idleness, 28.

YMPE, graft, scion, 75.

YOURE, yore, long ago, 60.



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- Adla, King of Southsex, 6.
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- Alfryde, son of Oswy of Northumberland, 17 : married Keneburge, 17.
- Alfrydus, 5, 138. Alfredus, Alredus, Aluredus, see Alredus, Biog. Dict. born at Beverley in Yorkshire, a secular priest, canon and treasurer of St. John's, Beverley. Wrote a History of Britain from the settlement of Brutus! to the year 1126, in which year he died. Hearne published an edition of his History, at Oxford, 1716, with a preface.
- Alle, King of Northumberland, 7.
- Alnot, servant to Werburge at Wedon, 101 : cruelly treated by her bailiff, 101 : who is miraculously punished by a distortion of his head, but afterwards healed, 101, 102 : murdered by thieves, buried at Stow besyde Bukbrydge, miracles displayed on his account, 103. Wilson, in the first edition of his English Martyrology, states that a festival in honor of Alnot was observed on the 24th of February, but in his second fixes the 25th of November as the day of solemnity.
- Alve, 90, Alvechurch in the diocese of Worcester.
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- Angels, nine orders angelical. Speculative persons in former times divided the angels into nine orders or choirs, but were not always agreed about their precise number or their respective ranks. The titles were Seraphim, Cherubim, Archangels, Angels, Thrones, Principalities, Powers, Dominions, Virtues. These again were divided into three Hierarchies. Represented on arras, 61 : take charge of the soul of St. Werburge, 115 : sung at the birth of King Edgar, 177.
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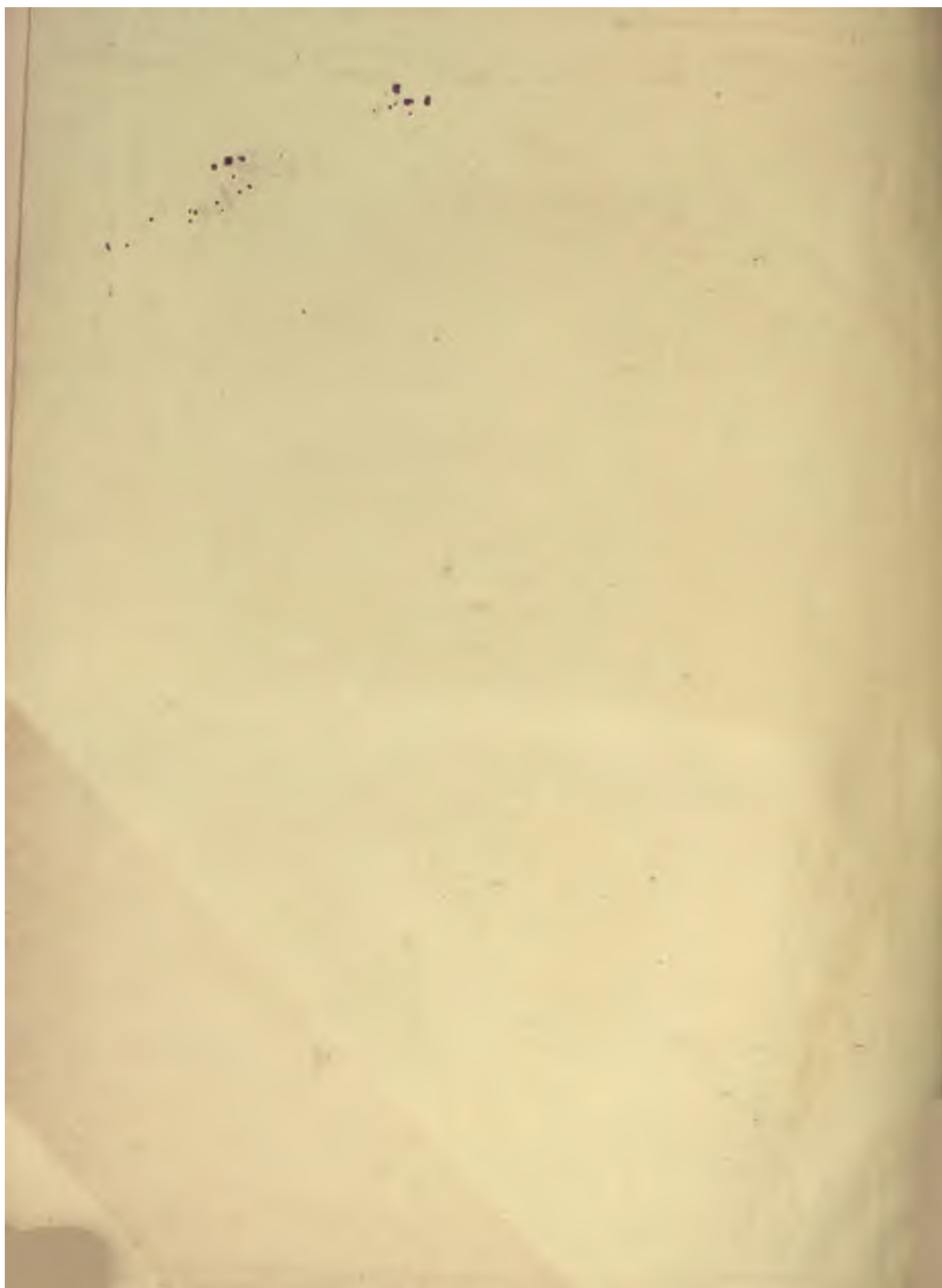
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